Will. Dowsing

A Godly Medytaty

on of the christen sowle Concer-
ninge a loue towarde [illegible] dad
hys Christe, compyled in frenche by lady
Margarete quene of Nauer, and apte-
ly translated into Englysh by the
ryght vertuouse lady Elyzabeth
doughter to our late souerayne
Kynge Henri the viij

Inclita filia, serenissimi olim Anglorum
Regis Henrici octaui Elizabeta, tam Græ-
cæ quam latine fœliciter in Christo
erudita.

To the ryght vertu-ouse and christenly lerned yonge lady Elizabeth, the noble doughter of our late soueraygne kynge Henry the. viij. Johan Bale wysheth helth with dayly increace of Godly knowledge. m.7.d.14.d.

GR. III. BR. MUS.

DIuerse and many (most gracyouse lady) haue the opynyons bene amonge the prophane philosophers and christen dyuynes, concernynge ryght Nobylyte, and no fewar stryues and contencyons for the same. Some autours haue vaynely boasted it to take orygynall of the olde Goddes of the Gentyles, as euery lāde hath had hys peculyar Saturne, Iupiter, & Hercules. yea our Englāde here and all. Some hath fatt it from the foure generall monarchyes of the Assyrianes, Perseanes, Grekes, and Romanes. Some haue attrybuted it, to the bolde battayles and bloudshedynges, in Ninus of Babylon the first inuētour of polycyes in warre. in our great Albion the Chamesene, whych first in thys regyon supres

Nobylyte

Albion

Brute. ſuppreſſed the poſterite of Japhet, vſurpynge therin the firſt monarchy. in Brute that more than ſix hondred yeares after defaced of hym the tyrannouſe yſſue. in Ebrãck and Dunwallo. in Brenne and Belyne. in great Conſtantyne, Arteure, Cadwalader, Engiſt, Egbert, Alphrede wyllyam cõquerour & ſoch other, forlyke cõqueſtes of the Romanes, Grekes. Galles, pyctes, Brytaynes. Saxons, Danes Iryſhens and Englyſhens.

Romani. The hawty Romanes ſet not yet a lyttle by themſelues, that they haue ryſẽ of Aeneas & Romulus, of whom the one moſt ſhamefully betrayed hys owne nature kyndred and contraye, and the other moſt vnnaturally ſlewe hys owne brother for worldly domynyõ. Lyke as our walſhemen here in Englande, aduaũcynge their ſucceſſyon or progeny aboue the Englyſh wyll nedes come of Dardanus & Brute, a foũdacyõ not all vnlyke to the other. Theſe gloryouſe champyons for thys farre fatched groũde of their Nobylyte, accoũte all other nacyons and peoples, ignoble, profane, and barbarouſe, as is to be ſeane in the monumẽtes of their writers. But in the meane ſeaſon, they are not aware that

Gwalli.

they

they wndyscretely prefarre cursed Cham to blessed Japhet, by whose posteryte the Iles of the Gentyles were first sorted out in to speches, kyndredes, and nacyons, Gene 10. and not by Chams offsprynge, of whome the Troianes and Romanes had their noble begynnynge. That the Chamsenes had in those Iles, was by cruell vsurpacyon & tyrāny, as testyfyeth Berosus the Caldeane and therfor that groūde of Nobylyte is not all the best. Ouer and besydes all thys, some haue applyed it to renomed byrth er succession of bloude, some to the habūdaūce of pleasures worldly some to the mayntenaūce of great famylyes, some to the sūptuousnesse of notable buyldynges, some to the hygh stomake & stature of persone, some to valeaūtnesse in marcyall feates, some to semely maners of courtesye, some to lyberalyte of rewardes and gyftes, some to the auncyennesse of longe coutynuaunce, some to wysdome lernynge & stody for a cōmē welth with soch lyke. And these are not all to be dysalowed, for we fynde them in Abraham, & Dauid with other iust fathers.

Japhet.

kyndes of Nobylyte

But now foloweth, a monstruouse, or whether ye wyll, a prestygyouse nobylyte

The Romysh clergye ymagenynge to exalte themselues aboue the lewde layte (as they shame notyet to call the worldly powers) haue geuen it in a farre other kynde, to mytars, masses, Cardynall hattes, crosers, cappes, shauen crownes, oyled thombes, syde gownes, furred amyses, mōkes cowles, and fryres lowsy coates, becōmynge therby pōtyfycall lordes, spirytuall sirs, and ghostly fathers. Thys kynde of Nobylyte dygged out of the dongehyll, haue I seane gorgyously garnyshed with the retoryckes of Porphyry, Aristotle, Duns, and Raymundus decretals, in the bokes of Johan Stanbery byshopp of herforde, De superioritate ecclesiastica, De discrimine iurisdictionum, and De potestate pōtificia. In the bokes also of Walter hūte an ordynary reader sūtyme in Oxforde, De precellētia Petri, & De autoritate ecclesie. Yea, and amōge thēselues they haue moch contended both by disputacyon & writynges, whych of their sectes myght other excell in the nobylnesse of christen perfection. The monkes in publyque scoles, by a dystynccyon of the actyue and contemplatyue lyfe, haue aduaunced their ydell mōkery aboue the

Clergy.

Stābery

Hunte.

offyce of a byshopp, and the fryres their scalde crauynge beggery. about the degrees of thē Both. As is largely seane in the brawlynge workes of Rychard de Maydeston, Thomas walden, Wyllyam Byntre & other whych haue written Contra wicleuistas, & Pro mēdicatione fratrū, fryres.

In the dayes of kynge Edwarde the fourt, Johan Mylucrton prouyncyall of the Carmelytes, was full thre yeares, a prysoner in the castell of Angell at Rome at the sute of the byshoppes of Englande for the same, and lost so the byshopryck of saynt Dauids, wherunto he was a lyttle afore elected. Thys matter haue I heard, vndre the tyttle of Euangelyck perfeccyon, most depely reasoned in their ordynary dysputacions at their concourses cōuocacyons, and chapters (as they than called them) yea by those whome I knewe most coruptlyuers, Herūto for fournyshynge out the same, the graye fryres added. S. frances paynted woūdes, the blacke fryres. S. Domynyckes bolde dysputynge with heretykes, the whyte fryres our ladyes fraternyte, and the Augustyne fryres the great doctryne of their patrone. In the vnyuersytees afte moch Mylucrton. 4. orders.

Prestes

to and fro, hath it bene concluded, that the order of a prest haue farre excelled in dygnyte the order of a byshopp. And thys haue they left behynde them for a most graue and depe reason therupon. Marke their more than lucyferyne presumpcyon therin. Soch power hath a prest (saye they) as hath neyther Angell nor yet Man, be he of neuer so great autoryte

OSeuils

scyence, or vertu. For a prest by worde ma-

Icarnate

ye make hym agayne, that by worde made heauen & earth. A prest maye euery daye both byget hym and beare hym, where as hys mother Marye bygate hym (beare hym they wolde saye) but ones. These are their very wordes in a boke entytled. De origine Nobilitatis. ca. 5. with moch more circumstaunce of matter. O blasphemouse bellybeastes, & most ydell wytted sorcerers. How ydolatrously exalte they themselues aboue the eternall lyuynge God & hys Christ?

Nobylyte

Johan Chrisostome a man taught and brought vp in the christen philosophy, defyneth the true Nobylyte after a farre other sort, than ded the prophane writers. He calleth it not with Aristotle, a worthynesse of progeny, neyther yet with

Varro,

Narro ā opulēcy of ryches, but a famouse renome obtayned by lōge exercysed vertu He is pusaunt, hygh, ādvaleaunt (sayth he) and hath Nobylyte in right course, that dysdayneth to geue place to vyces and abhorreth to be ouercomen of them Doctryne greatly adourneth a mā hygh ly borne, but a godly endeuoure of christyanyte bewtyfyeth hym most of all. By nō other wayes haue the Apostles and Martyrs obtayned a noble report, than by the valeaunt force of pure doctryne and fayth A gētyll hart (sayth Seneca) or a stomake that ys noble, moueth, prouoketh, and sturreth, only to thynges honest. No man whych hath a noble wytte, delyteth in thynges of small value, much lesse in maters of fylthynesse or supperstycyon. Chefely apperteyneth it to men and women of syncere Nobylyte, to regarde the pure doctryne and faythe. vnto soch hath God promysed in the scriptures, habundaunce of tēporall thynges, longe lyfe, fortunate chyldren, a kyngedome durable, with soch other, Deut. 28. Apostles. Fayth.

A most worthy conquerour is Gedeon noted in the scriptures, for destroyenge false relygyō & renuynge the kyngedome Gedeon.

Asa rex. of faythe. Judi. vj. So is kynge Asa, for remouynge the male stues from the prelates abhorrynge marryage, & for puttynge downe ydolles whych hys forefathers mayntayned. 3. Reg. 15 So is kynge Josaphat, for beynge couragyouse in the wayes of God, and for puttynge downe the hyll aulters & their sacrifices. 2. parali 17. So is kynge Jehu, for sleynge the ydolatrouse Prestes, and for breakynge and burnynge their great God Baal, and for makynge a Jakes of their holy churche 4. Reg. 10 So is kynge Ezechias for clensynge the house of the lorde from all fylthynesse, afore hys tyme therin occupyed 2. Parali. 29. and for breakynge downe the brasen serpent and ydolatrouse ymages with their aulters and sanctuaryes. 4. Reg. 18 So is kynge Josias, for suppressynge relygyouse persones and aulterprestes, for cōsumynge their iewels & ornamētes, & for ouerthrowynge their buggery chambers in the howse of the lorde 4. Reg. 23. Thys noble kīge also destroyed all theyr carued ymages, he strewed the dust of thē vpon their graues that had offered to them, and brent the prestes bones vpō their aulters, restorynge agayne

Josaphat

Jehu.

Ezechias

Josias.

Prestes.

the lawes

the lawes of the lorde. 2. parali. 34. Jesus Syrach reporteth of hym fynally, that he wholly e dyrected hys hart to the lorde, & toke awaye all abhomynacyons of the vngodly. Eccle. 49, Besydes that is spoken of kynge Dauid and kynge Salemon. Ecclesie 49.

Not Jonly, but many thousandes more whych wyll not from hens fourth bowe any more to Baal, are in full & perfyght hope, that all these most hyghly notable and pryncely actes, wyll reuyue & lyuely floryssh in your most noble and worthy brother kynge Edwarde the sixt. Most excellent & godly are hys begynnynges reported of the very forennacyōs callynge hym for hys vertuouse, lerned, and godly prudent youthes sake, the seconde Josias Those hys wonderfull pryncyples in the eyes of the worlde, and no lesse gloryouse afore God thus beynge to hys honoure, that eternall lyuynge God contynue and prospere to the ende, that he maye haue of them as had these worthy kinges afore rehearced, a ryght noble and famouse report. Nobylyte sought by wycked enterpryses and obtayned by the same (as in many afore our dayes, and in some now of late) is not els but a publyque and notable Edwarde vi. rex. Ignoble

notable infamye, and in the ende eternall dãpnacyon. Nobylyte wonne by the erneſt ſekynge of Gods hygh honour, is ſoch a precyouſe crowne of glory as wyll neuer peryſh here nor yet in the worlde to come

Tyraũtes

Cain after a worldly maner, or amõge the vngracyouſe ſort, is holden noble for ſlaynge hys brother Judas of the prelates (for he receyued of thẽ, a noble reward) for betrayenge Chriſt, Herode of the Jewes for murtherynge the innocẽtes. And what is there more worthy reproche, dyſhonour, and ſhame, than are theſe execrable factes? The nature of true Nobylyte

Nobylyte

lyte (as I haue ſayd afore) is not to ryſe of vyce but of vertu, though many men there ſeke it. Of the moſt excellẽt kinde of Nobylyte is he ſure (moſt vertuouſe and lerned lady) whych truly beleueth and ſeketh to do the wyll of the eternall father. for therby is he brought forewarde, and promoted into that heauenly kyndred Joã. 1. By that meanes becometh he the dearebrother, ſyſter, & mother of Chriſt Math. 12. a cytizen of heauen with the Apoſtles and Prophetes, Ephe. 2. yea the chylde of adopcyon and heyre togyther with Chriſt in the heauẽly inherytaunce

O Noble kyndred.

Rome

Roma. 8. No soch chyldren left Socrates behynde hym, neyther yet Demosthenes Plato, nor Cicero, with all their plesañt wysdome and eloquẽce. No soch heretage coulde great Alexander the Macedoneane, byqueth to hys posteryte neyther yet noble Charles, Artoure, nor Dauid. Alexãder

Of thys Nobylyte, haue I no doubt (lady most faythfully studyouse) but that yow are, with many other noble women & maydẽs more in thys blessed age. If questyon were axt me, how I knowe it? my answere wolde be thys. By your godly frute, as the fertyle tre is non other wyse than therby knowne, luce. vj. I receyued your noble boke, ryght frutefully of yow translated out of the frenche tunge into Englysh. I receyued also your golden sentences out of the sacred scriptures, with no lesse grace than lernynge in foure noble lãguages, Latyne, Greke, Frenche, & Italyane, most ornately, fynely, & purely writtẽ with your owne hande. Wonderfully ioyouse were the lerned men of our cytie, Murseus, Buscoducius, Bomelius Lithodius & Imãnus, as I shewed vnto them the seyd sentences, in beholdynge (as they than reported) so moch vertu. Frutes. 4. tũges. Men lerned.

faythe

fayth, scyence, & experyẽce of lãguages & letters, specyally in noble youth & femynyte. Through whych occasyon there be of thẽ (I knowe) that cannot withholde their lernèd handes frõ the publyshynge therof, to the hygh prayse of God the geuer, neyther yet from wrytynge to your worthy grace for studyouse contynuaunce in the same. Your seyd sẽtẽces, (they saye farre passeth the Apohthegmes of Plutarchus, the Aphorismes of Theognis, the Stratagemes of Isocrates, the graue golden coũsels of Cato & the manyfolde morals of Johan Goldeston the great allegoryser, with soche other lyke.

Sẽtẽces.

Your first written clausesin. iiij. speches latyne, frenche & Italyane, out of the xiij. Psalme of noble Dauid, mẽcyoneth that the vnfaythfull reckeneth folyshly in their hartes, there is no God. Wherupõ so corrupt they are in their vayne coniectures, and so abhomynable in their dayly doynges, that not one of their generacyõ is godly. By thys do your grace vnto vs sygnyfye, that the baren doctryne & good workes without fayth of the hypocrytes, whych in their vncõmaunded latyne cere monyes serue their bellyes & not Christ, in gredy

The first clause.

Hypocrytes.

ingredyly deuourynge the patrymony of poor wydowes & orphanes, are both execrable in themselues, and abhomynable afore God for though those paynted sepulchres haue the name of the lorde in their mouthes, & greatly boast the good workes of the lawe, yet knowe they not what belongeth to hys true honoure, but hate in their wycked hartes both hys gloryouse name and worde. The true doctryne of faythe, and the feare of God, wyll that wycked sort (whome thys psalme wryngeth) not heare, but styll tormēt the consceyences of myserable wretched ydyotes for aduauntage of Masses and momblynges. Happy are they of thys later age, that in the Gospell haue receyued the sauynge helth out of Syon (as your grace hath done) beynge clere from the styngeof those vyperouse wormes. Blessed be those faythfull tuters & teachers whych by their most godly instruccyons hane thus fashyoned your tender youth into the ryght ymage of Christ and not Antichrist. Yea most blessed be those godly gouernours and magistrates, whych haue traueled and yet laboryously trayle with worthy Moses, to brynge

Hate.

Happye.

Tuters.

Rulers.

Gods

Gods people clerely out of their most wretched captyuyte.

Your latter clause in the Greke. incyteth vs to the ryght worshyppynges of God in spirite and veryte Joã. 4. to honouringe of our parẽtes in the semely offyces of naturall chyldren. Ephe. vj. and to the reuerent vsynge of our christen equalles in the due mynystracyons of loue. 1. pet 2. Neyther Benedyct nor Bruno, Domynyck nor Frances (whych haue of longe yeares bene boasted for the pryncypall patrones of relygyon) euer gaue to their superstycyouse bretherne, so pure preceptes of syncere christyanyte. Neyther yet Peter lombarde in hys. iiij. bokes of sentẽces, with whose smokye dymynyte, the lowsy locustes monkes, chanons, prestes, and fryres. haue these. iiij. hondred yeares darkened the clere sunne, whych is the veryte of God, Apoca. 9. If godly wyse men wolde do nomore but conferre thys lernynge of yours and of other noble women in these dayes, with the doctryne of Robert Kylwarby archebyshopp of Canterbury and Cardynall, whych the vnyuersytees of Orforde & Parys were sworne to, formayntenaunce of that christyanyte in the yeare of

The latter clause

Monachi

Bhardus.

Robert. Kylwarby.

yeare of our lorde. 1276, by the consent of all masters regentes & non regentes, I doubt it not but they shulde synde iust cause to holde vp both their handes and prayse their lorde God for changynge that helle into thys heauen. An vnsauery gust therof shall they synde, adioyned of the Paryseanes as necessary dyuynyte, to the foreseyd sentẽces of Peter lombarde.

Achange

Theboke

In your forenamed boke, cõposed first of all by the ryght vertuouse lady Margarete, syster sũtyme to the frenche kynge Frances, and quene of Nauerre, And by your noble grace most dylygently and exactly translated into Englysh, synde I most precyouse treasure concernynge the sowle, Wherfor I haue added therunto the tytle of a Godly medytacyon of the sowle, concernynge a loue towardes God and hys Christ. Most lyuely in these and soch other excellent factes, expresse ye the naturall emphasy of your noble name Elischabeth in the hebrue, is as moch to saye in the latyne, as Dei mei requies, in Englysh, the rest of my God. Who can thynke God not to rest in that harte whych sendeth fourth soch godly frutes? I thynke nõ that hath ryght dyscressyon

Elizabe

yous

Your pēne hath here plenteouslye vttered
An hart. the habundañce of a Godly occupyed har
te, lyke as ded the vyrgynall lyppes of
Christes most blessed mother, whan she
sayd with heauenly reioyce, My sowle ma
gnyfyeth the lorde and my sprete reioy-
ceth in God my sauer, luce. 1. Many no-
ble women of fresh literature haue bene
afore tyme in thys regyon, whose nomēcla
ture or rehearsall of names I intende
Noble wo to shewe in the ende of thys boke, but non
mē lerned of thē were euer yet lyke to those whych
are in our age. No, neyther Cambra, Mar
tia, Constantia, Agasia, Vodicia, Bund-
uica, Claudia, Helena. vrsula. hilda, nor
soch other lyke. Thys one coppye of yours
haue I brought into a nombre. to thintēt
that many hungry sowles by the inesty-
Cōclusio. mable treasure contayned therin, maye
be swetely refreshed. The sprete of the
eternall sonne of God Jesus Christ, be
alwayes to your excellent grace assystent
that ye maye sende fourth more soch whol
some frutes of sowle, and become a nory
shynge mother to hys dere congregacyon
to their confort and hys hygh glorye
Amen. Your bounde oratour
Johan Bale

G.R. III. DR. MUS.

A Godly Medytacy on of the christen sowle, concerninge a loue towardes God and hys Christe, compyled in frenche by lady Margarete quene of Nauerre, and aptely translated into Englysh by the ryght vertuouse lady Elyzabeth doughter to our late souerayne Kynge Henry the. viij.

x se pag. 45. b.

GR. NI. BR. MUS.

The preface.

If thu do throughly reade thys worke (dere frynde in the lorde) marke rather the matter than the homely speache therof, consyderynge it is the stodye of a woman, whych hath in her neyther cōnynge nor scyence, but a feruent desyre that yche one maye se, what the gifte of God the creatour doth whan it pleaseth hym to iustyfye a hart. For what is the hart of a Man, concernynge hys owne strēgth, before he hath receyued the gift of faythe? Therby only hath he knowledge of the goodnesse, wysedome, and power of God. And as sone as he through that faythe, knoweth pythely the truthe hys hart is anon full of charyte and loue

Math. 8

Hebre. 11

So that by the feruentnesse therof, he ex-
1.Joa.4. cludeth all fleshly feare, & fyrmely trus-
steth in God vnfaynedly. for certaynely
the gifte, whych God the creatour geueth
frely at the begynnynge, doth neuer ceas-
tyll it hath made hym godly, whych put-
teh hys full trust in God.

O happy and fortunate gifte. whych
causeth a Man to possesse a grace so de-
syred Alas noman coulde thys vnderstan
Joan.6. de, onles by soch gyfte God had geuen it
hym. And great cause he hath to doubte
of it, ōles God hath made hym to feale it
in hys harte. Therfor gētyll reader, with
a godly mynde I besyche the pacyently
thys worke to peruse, whych is but small
in quantyte, and taste nothynge but the
frute therof. Prayenge to God full of all
goodnesse, that in thy harte he wyll plāte
the lyuely fayth e. Amen.

finit præfatio.

liber incipit

Here is the helle. full of trā-
uayle, payne, myschefe, and
Job.7. torment? Where is the pytte
of cursednesse, out of whych
doth sprynge all desperacyon? Is there
anyhelle

any helle, so profounde, that is suffycyent to ponnysh the tenth part of my synnes. whych are so many in nombre, that the infynyte swarme of them so shaddoweth my darkened sences that I can not accompte them neyther yet wele se them? I am farre entered in amongest them, and (that moch wors is) I haue not the power to obtayne the true knowledge of the depedaũgers of them. I perfyghtly fele, that their roote is in me, And outwardly I se non other effecte but all is eyther braũche leafe, or els frute that it bryngeth fourth all aboute me. If I thynke to loke for better, a brañche cõmeth and closeth myne eyes, and in my mouthe doth fall whan I wolde speake, the frute so bytter to swalowe downe. If my sprete be sturred for to harken, than a great multytude of leaues doth entre in myne eares, and my nose is all stopped with flowers.

Roma. 7.

Psal. 94.

Now beholde how in paynes cryenge & wepynge, my poore sowle, a slaue and prysoner, doth lye without lyghte, hauynge her fete bounde through her concupyscẽce & also both her armes through euyll vse yet the power to remedy it, doth not lye in me, neyther haue I power to crye for

2. Cor. 11.

helpe. Agayne, so farfourth as I can perceyue, I haue no hope of socour, but through the grace of God that I can not deserue, whych maye rayse euery one from deathe. By hys bryghtnesse he geueth lyght to darkenesse. And hys power examynynge my faulte, doth breake all the
Job. 12. vayle of ignoraunce, and geueth me clere vnderstādynge, not only that thys cometh of me, but also what thynge abydeth in me. Where I am and wherfor I do labour re. Who he is whom I haue offended, to whom I ded obeye so seldome. Therfor it is cōuenyent that my pryde be suppressyd

And humbly with wepynge harte, I do confesse that I am moch lesse thā nothynge, before my byrth myer, after a dunge hyll, a body prompte to all euyll not wyllynge other stodye, also subiect to care, so
Job. 14. rowe, and payne. A short lyfe, and thende vncertayne. The whych vndre synne by Adam is solde, and by the lawe iudged to be damnyd. For I had neuer the power to obserue one only cōmaundemente of God, I do fele the strength of synne in me, therfor is my synne no whyt the lesse to be hydden. And the more he is dyssembled outwardly, so moche the more he encreasyth

treasyth within the harte. That whych
God wyll, I can not wyll, and what he Sapi. 9
wolde not, I ofte tymes desyre to perfour
me. Whych thynge doth constrayne me
by importable sorowe, to Wyshe thende
of thys myserable bodye through desyred
death, bycause of my werye & ragynge life
Who shall be he than, that shall dely
uer and recouer suche good for me? Alas
it can not be a mortall man, for hys power
and strength is not suche, but it shall be Roma. 7
the only good grace of the almyghty God
whych is neuer slacke to preuent vs with
hys mercye O what a master is that, with
out deseruynge any goodnesse of hym? I
serued hym slouthfully, and without cea-
synge offended hym euery daye, yet is he
not slacke in helpynge me. He doth se the
euyll that I haue, what and how moche
it is, and that of my selfe I can do nothyn Gene. 6
ge that good is, but with hart and body
so enclyned am I to the contrarye, that
I feale no strength in me onles it be for
to do euyll. He doth not tarry tyll I hum
bly praye hym, or that (seynge my helle &
dāpnacyon) I do crye vpō hym. For with
hys sprete he maketh a waylynge in my
harte greatter than I can declare, whych

aſketh the gyfte wherof the vertu is vn-
Pſal. 37. knowen to my lytele power.

And thys the ſame vnknowne ſyghte doth brynge me a newe deſyre, ſhewynge the good that I haue loſt by my ſynne, & gyuē me agayne through hys grace & bo-ūrye, that whych hath ouercomē all ſynne O my lorde what grace and goodneſſe is thys, whych doth put out ſo manye ſynnes Now maye we ſe that thu art full of all godly loue to make me of a ſynner, thy ſer-uaūt & chyelde. Alas my God, I ded not
Luce. 19. ſeke the but I fled & rāne awaye frō the. And here beneth thu camyſt to me whych am nothynge but a worme of the earthe, all naked What do I ſaye, worme? I do hym wrōge, that am ſo naughtye, & ſwarme ſo full of pryde. deceyte, malyce & treaſon. The promyſe whych my fryndes made whā I was baptyſed is ſuch, that I al-
Colo. 3. wayes through fayth ein thy paſſyō ſhuld fele the mortyfycacyō of my fleſhe & dwelle alwayes with the ī the croſſe where thu wert faſt nayled (as I beleue) and yelded death dead as I alſo ſhuld yelde all ſynne

Thys haue I often tymes taken downe agayne, vntyed, and ſet at large, I haue brokē, denyed, and falſyfyed my promyſe

and

& throughe pryde, I haue lyft vp my wyll in ſuche a maner, that throughe ſlouth. my dewtye towardes the was forgoten. And that moche more is, as wele the profyte or value of thy promyſe, whych I had of the in the daye of my baptyſme, as alſo thy ſauynge loue and promyſes folowynge, I haue all alyke neglected. What ſhall I ſaye more? Albeit that often tymes thu perceyuynge me wretched and vnhappye haſt geuē me ſo many warnynges in fayth and in ſacramētes, admonyſhynge me by preachynges, and confortynge me by the recayuynge of thy worthye bodye and ſacred bloude, promyſynge alſo to put me in the nombre of them that are now adourned with perfyght innocencye. Yet haue I all theſe hygh benefyghtes, throwne into forgetfullneſſe, Mar. 16. Joan. 6.

Oftentymes haue I with the broken couenaunte. And partly for that my poore ſowle was to moche fed with euyll breade or dāpnable doctryne of hypocrytes, I deſpyſed ſuch ſocoure and ghoſtly phyſyck in Gods worde, as wolde haue holpe me And if I had bene wyllynge to loke for it yet knewe I at that tyme no teachers cōuenyent. For there is neyther man, ſaynte, Hiere. 7.

nor Angell, for whome the harte of a synner without thy sprete wyll change. Alas good Jesus, thu beholdynge my blyndenesse, and that at my neade I coulde haue no socour of men, dedyst open the waye of my saluacyon. O how great is the goodnesse, and howinestymable the swetnesse whych thu hast shewed therin? Is there any father so naturall to the daughter or brother to the syster, whych wolde euer haue done as he hath done? For he came into thehelle to socour my sowle, where a gaynst hys wyll she was, intendynge to haue peryshed, because she ded not loue

Psal. 118.

Alas swete lorde thu hast loued her yea, to the very outshedynge of thy most precyouse bloude. O charyte feruent and incōparable. Not slacke art thu in loue that so louest euery synner, yea, and also thyne enemyes. not only in forgeuynge their offences, but also in geuynge thy self for their saluacyon, lybertie, and delyueraunce, to the death, crosse, trauayle payne and sufferaunce. Whan I cast in mynde, what shulde be the occasyō of thy loue towardes me. I can se nothynge els but a loue wonderfull, whych moueth the to gene me that I can not deserue. Than

1. Joā. 3.

Joā. 5.

my God

my God as farre fourth as I can se, I ought to geue no thākes for my saluacyon but only vnto the, to whome I owe the prayse ther of, as to hym whych is my sauyour & creatoure. What a thynge is it that thu hast done so moche for me? Thu art not only contented to haue forgyuen me my synnes, but also hast gyuē vnto me ther yght fortunate gifte of grace. Ephe. 2.

For it shulde sufficyse me, I cōmynge out of suche a daunger, to be lyke a straunger vsed. But thu dost handle my sowle, (if I durst so saye it) as a mother. daughter, syster and wyfe. I lorde, I am the trespaser whych am not worthy to come nere the doze of thy ryght hygh place to aske breade, where thy dwellynge is. O what grace is thys, that so sodenly thu voucheſauyst to drawe my sowle in to suche hyghnesse, that she felyth herselfe ruler of my bodye. She poore, ignoraunte and lame, doth fynde her selfe wyth the ryche, wyse, and stronge, because thu hast written in her harte the roote of thy spre te, & holy worde. geuynge her true fayth for to receyue it. Whych thynge made her to conceyue thy sonne, in beleuynge hym to be man, God, sauyour, and also the true Roma. &

remytter of synnes. Therfor dost thu as-
Math.12 sure her, that she is mother to thy sonne of whom thu art the only faither.

And farthermore, O my father here is a great loue, for thu art not wery of wele doynge syth that thy sonne full of dyuynyte hath taken the bodye of a man, & ded myngle hymselfe with our ashes, whych thynge a man can not vnderstãde vnlesse he hath a true faythe. It hath pleased the
Phil.2. to put hym so neare vs, that he ded ioyne hymselfe vnto our flesshe. Than we seynge hym to be called man, we are holde to call hym syster and brother. Now the sowle whych maye saye of her selfe, that she is the syster of God, ought to haue her harte assured. After thys dost thu declare with greate loue, how her creacyon is only of the good wyll, whych it pleaseth the alwayes to haue towardes her, geuynge assurraunce that before her first daye, or tyme of beynge prouyded for her. thu bestowedest thy loue on her, & how through loue
Gene.1. thu hast made her (as alone of power thu cannyst wele do it) and also how thu dedyst put her within thys body, not for to sleape with slouth, but that both of them shulde haue non other exercyse, but only

to thynke

to thynke how to do some seruyce vnto the
Than the truthe maketh her to feale
that there is in the, true paternyte. O
what honoure, what swetnesse, and what Tren. 2.
glory hath the sowle, whych doth alwa-
yes remẽbet that she is thy daughter, &
in callynge the fayther, she doth thy com
maundement: What is there more: Is
that all: Nio, It doth please the to gyue
her an other name, to call her thy wyfe, &
that she agayne do call the husbande,
declarynge how thu hast frely manyfested
the marryage of her. By the baptysme
thu hast made a promes, to gyue her thy
goodes and ryches, and thu agayne to ta- Coloss. 2
ke her synnes, for she hath nothynge els
by herytage of her first father Adam. All
her treasures, that she hath of nature, ar-
nothynge els but synnes, whych thu h
tyed vpon the, and payed all her w,
debte with thy goodes and landes
Thu hast made her so ryche, and with
so great a ioynter endued her, that she kno
wynge her selfe to be thy woyd wyfe, doth
beleue to be quyt of all that she oweth, Roma. 5
estemynge very lytel that she hath here
beneth. She forsaketh her olde father, &
all the goodes that he gyueth, for her

husbandes

husbandes sake. Surely (o my God) my sowle is sore hurte to be fedde with suche good, and agayne releued in leauynge the
1. Joa. 5. pleasure of thys worlde for that whych is eternall, where peace is without warre. I maruayle that she, thys remembrynge, doth not lese her witt, countenaunce, and speache. Father, father, alas what ought I to thynke. Shall my spretebe so bolde as to take vpon hym to call the father: yea, and also our Father, for so hast thu taught in the Pater noster. But to call the daughter, hast thu so sayd? I be
Drouer, syche the, tell me. Alas yea, whan with
2. great swetnesse, thu saydest daughter, lend me thy harte.

O my God, in stede of lendynge, he is ready to geue hym selfe wholly vnto the
ceyue hym than, & do not permyt that
y creature put hym from the, so that for euer with faythfull stedefastnesse he maye leue the with a daughterly loue. Now my lorde if thu be my father, maye I thynke that I can be thy mother? In
Apoca 13 dede I cannot wele preceyue, how I shulde conceyue the that created yst me. But thu dedyst in thys matter satisfye my doubte, whan in preachynge and in

streatchynge

greatchynge fourth thy hādes dedyst saye
Those that shall do the wyll of my father math 12. 49
they are my bretherne, also my syster and
mother. I beleue than, that hearynge &
readynge the werdes whych thu hast
taught & vttered by thy holy prophetes.
the same also whych through thy true pre
achers, thu dost dayly declare vnto mē in Luce, 11.
beleuynge it and stedefastly desyerynge
to fulfyll, I cōceyue the & beare the by loue
Therfor without āye feare, wyll I take
vpō me the name of a mother. What mo=
ther of God? O swete vyrgyne Marye, I
beseyche the. be not angry that I take vp
suche a tytle. I do neyther stele, nor vsurpe
any thynge vpon thy pryuylege. For thu
only hast aboue all womē receyued of hym
so great honoure, that nemā can in hym
selfe comprehende how he hath bene wyl Math. 1.
lynge to take in the our flesshe. For thu ar
te mother and perfyght vyrgyne before
and after, and in hys holy byrth. In thy
blessyd wembe thu dedyst beare hym and
norysh hym. Thu dedyst folowe hym in
hys trybulacyons, and also in hys teachyn
ges. Now breuely to conclude. Thu hast
with God founde suche grace, as the
enemye through malyce and deceyte,
had caused

had causyd Adam & hys posteryte to lose
1.Cor.15. By Eue and hym we had lost it, & by thy
sonne hath it bene yelded vntovs agayne
Therfor hast thu bene ryghteously cal
Luce.1. led full of grace. For thu lackedyst neyther grace nor vertu, sith that he whych is the best amonge them that be good, also the sprynge of all goodnesse and power whych hath created in the so pure innocēcye that thu arte the example of all uertues) hath buylded in the hys dwellynge & temple. Be throughe loue ded conforme hymselfe with the, and thu arte transfourmed in hym. Therfor if any man shulde thynke to geue the greatter prayse than God hymselfe hath done, it were a fule
Luce.1. blasphemye. For there is no suche prayse, as is the same whych commeth from God Thu also hast had fayth e solyrme and cōstaunt, that (by grace) she had the power to make the godly. Wherfor I wyll not take vpon me, to geue the greatter prayse than the hououre whych thy soueraygne
Acto.12 lorde hath geuen vnto the. For thu arte hys corporall mother, and also thruogh fayth hys spyrytuall mother.

And I folowynge thy fayth with humbleneſſe, am hys spirytuall mother also

Alas

Alas my God the brotherlynesse that thu
hast towardes me throngh thy humblt=
nesse, in callynge me syster, is great. De=
dyst thu euer saye it any thynge asore?
Alas yea. For thu hast broken the kyndred
of my olde father, callynge me doughter Roma. 8
by adopcyon. Well than, seynge that we
haue both but one father, I wyll not feare
to call the my brother. For so hast thu re=
ported it by Salomon in hys bellet. sayn= Canti. 4
ge, My syster and spouse thu hast woun=
ded my harte with the swete loke of one
of thyne eyes, and with one cheyne of thy
necke. Alas my brother, I wyshe for no
thynge els, but that in woūdynge the, I
myght fynde my selfe wounded with thy
loue, To that wolde I geue ouer my selfe
And lyke wyse thu dost call me wyfe in
that place, shewynge largely that thu lo
uyst me, saynge by these wordes amorouse
Aryse my dere doue, and come hyther= Cauti. 2
warde my dylectable spouse. Therfor shal
I saye with louynge fayth, thu arte myne
and I am thyne. Thu dost call me thy loue
& fayre spouse. If it be so, suche hast thu
made me. Alas, doth it please the, to gyue
me suche names? They are truly able to
breake a mannys harte, and cause it to

burne throughe loue vnspeakeable, whan he thynketh vpon the honoure that thu dost vnto hym, whych is moche greatter than he hath deserued. A mother, a mo
Luce. 8. ther: Alas but of what chyldei s it? Truly of suche a sonne, that my harte doth breake for loue. My God, my sonne: O Jesus what speache hys is. mother, daughter. O happy kynrede. O what swetnesse doth proceade out of that paternyte. But what doughterly and reuerent feare ought I to haue towardes hym, my father, yea & my creatour, my protectour and sauer? To be thy syster, alas here is a great loue.
Canti. 8. Now dost thu breake my harte i the myddest to make rowme for the same so swete a brother. So that no other name be writē in the same, but only my brother Jesus the sonne of God. Non other man wyll I
Acto. 4. gene place to, for all the scourgynge and beatynge, that they cā do vnto me. Keape my harte then, my brother and frynde, & lete not thy enemy entre in toit. O my father, chylde, brother, and spouse, with hā desioyned, humbly vpon my knees I yelde the thankes and prayses, that it pleaseth the to turne thy face towardes me conuertynge my harte, and couerynge me

with

with suche grace, that thu dost se nomore
my euyls & synnes. So wele hast thu hyd
den them, that it semeth, thu hast put thē Ezech 33
in forgetfulnesse, Yea, & also they seme
to be forgoten of me, whych haue cōmytted
them, For fayth and loue causeth me to
forget them, puttynge wholly my trust
in the alone,

Than my father, in whom lyeth vnfay
ned loue, wherof can I haue feare in my
harte? I confesse that I haue done all
the euyll that one creature can do, and Psal. 31
that of my selfe I am nought. Also that
I haue offended the as the prodygall chyl
de ded, folowynge the folysh trade of the Luce. 15. 16.
flesshe, wherewith I haue spente all my —21.
substaūce, and the habundaūce of goodes
whych I had receyued of the. For pouer
te had wetheryd me awaye euen as heye
and yelded my sprete dead for hunger, sea
kynge to eate the releafe of swyne. But
I founde very lytle sauoure in suche mea
tes. Than I seynge my lyfe to be so myser
able, I ded returne vnto the my father aga
yne, sayenge. Alas I haue synned in hea= Ezech 18.
uen and before the. I am not worthy (I
tell it before euery bodye) to be called thy
chylde. But O bountyfull father, do no

worse to me, than to one of thy howshold de seruauntes.

Alas what loue and zele is thys? for thu woldest not tarry my commynge and prayer but stretchynge out thy hāde receyuedyst me, whan I ded thynke that thu woldest not loke vpon me. And in stede to haue ponnyshed, thu dedyst assure me of my saluacyon. Where is he thē that shall ponnysh me, whan my father shall denye hym my synne? There is no indge that can condēpne anye creature, vnlesse God hymselfe wolde dampne hym. I feare not the want of goodnesse, syth I haue my God for my father. My enemye shall do me no harme, for my father shall take all hys strength awaye. If I owe anye thynge, he shall paye it all for me, If I haue deserued death, he (as a kynge) shall pardō me, & delyuer me frō pryson & hāgynge.

Luce. 15. 18. 21. 22.

Esa. 27.

But here is the worst. What maner of mother haue I bene? For after that I by fayth, had receyued the name of a true mother, I became very rude vnto the, by cause that after I had conceyued and brought the fourth, I left reason, And beynge subiect to my wyll, not takynge hede vnto the, I fell a slepe and gaue place to

Roma. 7.

place to my great enemye, The whych i the nyght of ignoraunce, I beynge a sleape ded steale the from me craftely, and in thy place, she ded put her chylde whych was dead. So ded I lese the, whych is an harde sorowe and remorce for me. Now haue I lost the by myne owe faulte (my sonne) bycause I toke no hede to kepe the. Sensualyte my neyghbour (I beynge in my beastly sleape) ded steale the from me, & gaue me, an other chylde whych had no lyfe in hym, named synne, whom I wyll not haue, for I do vtterly forsake hym. 3. Reg. 3. 18 -27.

She affirmed that he was myne owne but I knewe hym to be hers. For as sone as I came to the lyght of grace, whych thu haddest gyuē me, thā I knewe my glory to be changed, whan I sawe the dead chylde not to be myne. For the same whych was alyue (whom she had taken awaye) was myne owne. Betwene Jesus & synne is the chaunge so apparant. But here is a straunge thynge. Thys olde woman causeth me to kepe hym whych is dead, whom she reporteth to be myne, and so she wyll maynteyne. O Salomō, a full true iudge, thu hast heard e thys lamentable processe and ordayned to cōtent the partyes, that 2. Cor. 6.

the chylde ſhulde be deuyded in two par-
tes. The falſe woman agreyth, it ſhulde
3. Reg. 3 be ſo. But J remembrynge hym to be my-
25. ne owne ſonne, was rather contente to
leſe hym, than to ſe hys bodye parted in
two peces. For true and pefyght loue is
neuer contente with one halfe of that it
doth loue.

J had rather to wepe for my whole
loſſe, than to recouer but one halfe. My
mynde coulde not be ſatyſſyed. if J had
recouered one halfe without lyfe. Alas
1. Cor. 4. gyue her rather the chylde whych is alyue
Better it is for me to dye, than to ſe Jeſus
Chriſt dyuyded. But O my lorde, thu de
dyſt loke better to it than J. For thu ſeyn-
ge the anguyſh that J ded ſuffer, & how
J ded rather forſake my rvght, than to
beholde ſnche cruelneſſe Thu ſaydeſt, thys
is the true mother and ſo cauſed them to
gyue me my chylde agayne, for whom my
harte was ſo ſorowfull. O ſwete Jeſus, J
Sapi. 7. founde the after, to haue proued me if J
ded loue the. yea, J whych had loſt the
yet dedyſt thu returne vnto me, Alas doſt
thu vouchesaue to come agayne to her,
whych beynge lett with ſynne coulde not
kepe the, my ſwete chylde, my ſonne, my

helper

helper, my norysher, of whome I am a ryght humble creature. Do not permytt that euer I do leaue the agayne, for I do repent my selfe of the tyme passed. Gene. 6.

Now come my sensualyte with synnes of all qualytees, for thu hast no power to make me receyue the chylde whych is dead. The same that I haue is stronge ynough for to defende me, & he shall not permyt that thu take hym awaye from me, He is alredy more stronge than anye man is. Therfor I maye sleape and take rest neare hym. For all thynges wele consydered, he shall kepe me moche better than I coulde hym. Then as I thynke I maye take rest. O swete rest of the mother & the sonne togyther, my swete chylde. O my God, honour & prayse be vnto the only, so that euery creature maye se how it hath pleased the to call me a mother, lesse than nothynge. The more that the thynge is straunge and harde to be done, the more ought thy goodnesse to haue prayse for it. And also I fynde my selfe more bounde vnto the than euer I ded for thys, that it pleaseth the to haue retayned me for thy syster. Esa. 32. Psal. 118

I am syster vnto the but so naughty a

syster, that better it were for me. that I were without the name, for I forgate the honoure of adopcyon in so noble a kyndred, & also thy so good & brotherly behauer towardes me. I with pryde ded ryse agaynst the and (not remembrynge my faultes, but goynge a straye from the, ded agree with my brother Aaron, beynge in wyll to geue iudgment agaynst thy workes. Priuely I grudged agaynst the also, whych thynge causeth me to haue a great remorce in my conscyence. Alas ryght bountyfull God, brother and true Moses. whych doist all with goodnesse and Justyce. I haue estemed thy workes to be euen synne, beynge so bolde to speake euyn as shely, saynge. Wherfor hast thu marryed a straunge woman? Thu gyuest vs a lawe, and ponnyshemente if we do not fulfyll it. And thu woldest not be bounde to it, forbyddynge vs the thynge whych thu thy selfe doist.

Nume. 12.

Nume. 12

Deute. 5.

For thu doist forbyd vs to kylle anye man, and thu doist kylle and sparist non of thre thousande whych thu causydest to be slayne. Also God gaue vs in commaundemente by the, that we shulde not marry the doughter of a straunger. Yet

Exo. 32.

Exo. 34.

thu

shu tokest thy wyfe amonge them. Alas my dere brother, with a great meany of soche wordes (whom I knowe to be folyshe) with Aaron (whych is my owne wytte) I imbrayded the, Wherof I dore pente. For the lyuely voyce of God, rebukyngly toke me vp, before I wente out of the place. What woldest thu than of my synne? Alas my brother thu woldest not hane me ponnyshed. but rather woldest my saluacyon and helthe, in askynge for me, thys great benefyght, that it shulde please God to mytygate hys iudgemente The whych thynge thu couldest not obtayne. For I became a lazar, so that whan any body shulde loke vpō me, they myght wele se that I had not bene wyse. And so was I put ont from the tentes and tabernacles of the people, bycause that a sycke bodye maye infecte thē whych be in helthe Ezech. 18 Nume 12

Oh, a sowle cannot haue a greatter Pōnyshement, than to be bannyshed out of the cumpanye of them whych are holye and good: But what dedyst thu seynge my repentaunce? Thu prouydedyst that my penaunce was sone at an ende, and with trne loue dedyst make meanes for me, wherupon I ded returne. O what Ezech 33 1. Joā. 2

a brother wolde, in stede to ponnyshe hys folysh syster, so naturally cleaue vnto her? For iniurye, grudge, & great offẽce, thu geuyst her grace & loue in recõpẽce Alas my brother, how excedynge is thye thy loue? Moch more is it, than brothers
Psal. 50. hede is bounde to geue to so poore & wretched a woman as I am. I haue done the euyll, and thu geuyst me good for it, I am thyne, and thu sayest, thu arte myne. Euẽ so I am, and wyll be so for euer. I feare nomore the great folyshenesse of Aaron, for nomã maye separat me frõ the. Now that we are brother & syster togyther, I care very lytle for all other men. Thy landes are myne owne inherytaunce.

Lete vs than kepe (if it please the) but one howsholde. Syth it haue pleased the
Phil. 2. to humble thy selfe so moche, as to ioyne thy hart with myne, in makynge thy selfe a leuely mã, I doryght hartely thãke the And as to do it as I ought, it lyeth not in my small power. Take my meanynge than, and excuse my ignoraunce, seynge I am of so great a kyndred as to be thy syster. O my God, I haue good cause, to loue, to prayse, & to serue the vnfaynedly and not to feare, nor to desyre any thynge

saue the

saue the only. Kepe me wele than, for I aske nō other brother nor frynde. If anye father haue had anye pytie vpon hys chylde. If anye mother haue take anye care for her sonne. If anye brother haue hyd the synne of hys syster, it is thu. I neuer sawe (or els it was kepte wōders secrete) that euer husbande wolde througly forgyue hys wyfe. after she had hym ones offended, and ded returne vnto hym. Hester.14

There haue bene ynough of thē whych for to auēge their wronges. haue caused the iudges to put them to deathe. Other beholdynge their synnes, ded not spare their owne hādes, sodenly to kylle them. Other also seynge their faultes to apere, ded sende thē home agayne to their owne fryndes. Some perceyuynge their euyll dysposycyons, haue shut them vp faste in a pryson. Now breuely to conclude vpon their dyuerse complexyons, The ende of their pretence is ponnyshment, and the least harme that euer I coulde perceyue in pōnyshynge thē. is thys, that they wolde neuer se thē agayne. Thu shuldest rather make the skye to turne thā, so to forsake thy wyfe for her mysdoynge. Wherfor my God, I can fynde nomā to be cōpared vnto the. For of loue thu arte the perfect Nero. Deut.24.

example. Now my God, more than euer I ded, I confesse that I haue broken my othe and promyse.

Alas thu haddyst chosen me for thy wyfe, and dedyst set me vp in great state & honoure. For what greatter honoure maye one haue, than to be in the place of thy wyfe, whych swetely taketh hed rest so nere the. Of all thy goodes quene, mastres, and lady, and also in surctie both of body and sowle. Of great fauoure is it, that I so vyle a creature, am so ennoblyshed by the. Now to speake it breuely. I haue more, & better than any man mortall can desyre. Wherfor my harte hath cause to sygh alwayes, and with habundaunce of teares, myne eyes to come out of my heade. My mouthe can not make to many exclamacyons. For there is neyther newe nor auncyent writynges, that can shewe so pytiefull a case, as the same is whych I wyll tell now. Shall, or dare I tell it? Maye I pronounce it without shame? Alas yea. For my confusyon is it not to shewe the great loue of my husbāde. Therfor I care not, if for hys worshyp I do declare my faulte.

Joan. 15.

Luce .6.

Psal. 50.

O my sauer, whych dyed & was crucyfyed on

syed on the crosse for my synnes. Thys dede is not suche, as a father to leaue hys sonne, or as a chylde to offēde hys mother or elsas a syster to grudge & chyde. Alas thys is worse. For the offence is greatter where more loue & knowledge is. For the more famylyaryte we haue with God & the more benefytes we receyue of hym the greatter is our offēce whan we with hym dyssemble. Specyally that I shuld so do, whych am called hys spouse, and loued of the as thyne owne sowle. Shall I tell the truthe? Yea. I haue lefte the, forgoten the, & ranne awaye from the. I ded leaue the forto go at my vayne pleasure. I forsoke the and chose other. Yea, I refused the, the welsprynge of all goodnesse and faythfull promyse. I ded leaue the. But whyther went I? Into a place where nothynge was but cursednesse. Esa. 5. Job. 18.

I haue lefte the my trusty frynde and louer, worthy to be loued aboue all other I haue put the aside. o welsprynge of all helthesomnesse, by myne owne wretched wyll. Yea, I haue forsaken the, full of bewtie, goodnesse, wysdom, and power, & sought to withdrawe me from thy loue. I haue accepted thy great enemyes, that

is the

is the deuyll, the worlde, and the flesshe,
a gaynst whō thu faughtest so sore on the
Hebre. 12 crosse, to ouercome for my sake, to set me
at lyberte, whych was by thē of lōge tyme
a prysoner slaue. And so bounde, that no
man coulde cause me to humble my selfe
And as for the loue & charytee that I shul
de haue had towardes the, they ded quē-
che it for that the name of Jesus my husbā
de, whych before I had founde so swete,
was to me tedyouse & hatefull. So that
often tymes I ded iest at it. And if any
Luce. 8. man (I hearynge a sermon) had sayd vn
to me, the preacher sayth wele. I wolde
afferme it but the worde went awaye
from me, as a fether doth in the wynde.

I went neuer yet to the preachynge,
but for maner only. All my dedes were
playne hypocresye, for my mynde was in
other places. I was anoyed whan I hear
de speake of the, for I was more wyllynge
to go at my pleasure. Now breuely to con
clude, All that thu dedyst forbyd me, I
fulfylled & all that thu cōmaūdedyst me
Hiere. 2. to do, I ded eschewe. And thys was the
cause (my God) I ded not loue the. But
yet lorde, for all thys that I ded hate the
and forsake the, ranne awaye from the, &

betrayed

betrayed the, shulde I geue thy place to
an other? Or hast thu suffered that I
shulde be mocked, eyther yet beatē or kyl-
led? Hast thu put me in darke pryson, or
bannyshed me for euer, settynge nought
by me? Hast thu taken awaye thy gyftes
agayne from me, and precyouse iewels, to
ponnysh me for my vnfaythfull frutes?
Haue I lost myioynter whych thu promy Math.25
sedyst me, throughmy offēce agaynst the?
Am I accused by the afore the eternall
father, for a naughty woman? Yea, hast
thu forbyd me thy presēce (as I deserued)
& that I shulde neuer apere in thy howse?
O most true husbāde, & pure perfyght
frynde, the most louynge yet amonge all
good louers. Alas thu hast done otherwy
se. For thu soughtest for me dylygenly, Luce. 15.
whan I was goynge into the most depe 22
place of helle, where all the euyls are do-
ne. Whan I was fardest frē the both
in harte and mynde, & clerlye out of
the true waye. Than dedyst thu louyng
lye call me backe, saynge. My dere dou
ghter harken, and se, and bowe thy
hearynge towardes me. Forget that
straunge nacyon to whem thu dedyst
ronne awaye and also the house of thyne Psal. 44
olde fathe

olde father, where thu haſt dwelled ſo longe Than ſhall the kynge full of all faythfulneſſe, deſyre thy bewtie. But whan thu ſaweſt that thy ſwete & gracy ouſe callynge. ded not profyte me. than be gannyſt thu to crye lowder. Come vnto me all yow whych are wearyly loaden with laboure. for I am he that ſhall plenteouſly refreſhe yow and feade yow with my breade of lyfe. Alas vnto all theſe ſwete wordes wolde I not harken.

Math. 11 28

For I doubted whether it were thu, or elſa fabyllouſe writynge that ſo ſayde. For I was ſo folyſhe, that without loue I ded reade thy worde. I conſydered not wele the compariſon of the vyneyearde whych brought fourth thornes & bryers in ſtede of good frute, that it ſygnyfyed me whych had ſo done. I knowe it wele ynough, that whan thu dedyſt call the baren wyfe, ſaynge. Returne Sulamyte. All thys dedyſt thu ſpeake that I. ſhulde forſake my ſynne. And of all theſe wordes ded I, as though I had vnderſtande neuer a whytt. But whan I ded peruſe Hieremy the prophete, I confeſſe that I had in the readynge therof, feare in my harte and baſhefulneſſe in my face. I wyll

Eſa. 5.

Canti. 6.

tell us

tell it, yea with teares in myne eyes, and
all for thy honoure, and to suppresse my
pryde. Thu hast sayde by that holy pro-
phete, if a woman hath offended her hus- Hiere. 3
bande. and is so left of hym for goynge a
straye with other. Namely if he therupō
refuseth her for euer. is she not to be este
med poluted and of no value?

The lawe doth consente to put her in
the hādes of iustyce, or to dryue her awaye
& so neuer to se her or tot ake her agayne.
Thu hast made the sepracyon from my
bedde (sayth he vnto me) & placed foren
louers in my roume, commyttynge with
them fornycacyon. Yet for all thys thu Ezech. 18
mayst returne vnto me agayne. For I wyll
not alwayes be ā grye agaynst the. Lyfte
vp thyne eyes, & loke aboute the on euery
syde. Thā shalte thu wele se, into what
place thy synne hath led the, & how thou
lyest downe in the earthe. O poore sowle,
loke where thy synne hath put the. Euen
vpon the hygh wayes, where thu dedyst
wayte, and tarrye for to begyle thē that
came by, euen as a these doth whych is
hydden in the wylderneesse: Therfor thu Hiere. 3
in fulfyllynge thy wicked pleasure, hast
with fornycacyon infected all the earthe

whych was aboute the. Thyne eye, thy fore heade, and thy face haue loste all their honest good maner. For they were suche as an harlot hath, and yet thu haddest no shame of thy synne.

And the surplus that Hieremy sayth, constrayneth me to knowe my wretched lyfe, & to wyshe with sorowfull syghes, the houre, the daye, the moneth, the tyme
Job. 10. and the yeare, that I ded leaue it, yeldynge my selfe condempned, and worthy to be for euer in the euerlastynge fyre. The same feare whych doth not of me but of the procede, and exceadeth many of thy other gyftes, put me rather in hope than dyspayre, as often as I ded remembre my synne. For as sone as thu knewest my wyll bowynge vndre thy obedyence, than puttynge in me a lyuely fayth, thu dedyst vse great clemencye. So that after I knewe
Hebre. 11 the to be that lorde, master, and kynge whom I ought to haue feared. Than foūde I my feare not quenched, but mixed with loue, beleuynge that thu wert so gracyouse, gentyll, and swete, & so pytiefull an husbande, that I whych shulde rather haue hydde me, than to haue shewed my selfe, was not than in feare to go fourth

and to

and to loke for the. And in so sekynge I
founde the.

But what dedyst thu than? Hast thu re
fused me? Alas my God, no, but rather
hast excused me. Hast thu turned thy fa=
ce from me? No, for thyne eye so swete ded Psal. 9.
penetrate my harte, woūdynge it almost
to the deathe, and geuynge me remorse of
my synnes. Thu hast not put me backe Canti. 4.
with thy hāde, but with both thy armes
and with a swete, and māly harte thu de
dyst mete with me by the waye, and not
ones reprouynge my faultes, enbrasydest
me. I coulde not se in beholdynge thy cō
tenaunce, that euer thu dedyst ones per=
ceyue myne offence. For thu hast done as
moche for me, as though I had beue good
and honest. For thu dedyst hyde my faulte
from euery body, in geuynge me agayne Roma. 8.
the parte of thy bedde, and also in shewyn
ge that the multitude of my synnes are so
hyddē & ouercome by thy great vyctorye
that thu wylte neuer remembre thē. So
that now thu seyst nothynge in me, but
the graces, gyftes and vertues whych it
hath pleased thy fre goodnesse to gyue me

O charyte most precyouse. I do se
wele that thy goodnesse doth consume

my lewdeneſſe, & maketh me a newe godly and bewtyfull creature. The euyll that was myne, thu haſt deſtroyed, and made me ſo perfyght a creature, that all the good whych a huſbande can do vnto hys wyfe thu haſt done it to me, in geuynge me, a faythfull Hope in thy promyſes. Now haue I through thy good grace recouered the place of thy wyfe. O happye & deſyered place, gracyouſe bedde, trone
Math. 11 ryght honourable, ſeate of peace, reſt from all warre, hygh ſteppe of honoure, ſeparate from the earthe. Doiſt thu receyue thys vnworthy creature, geuynge her the ſceptre and crowne of thy empyre and gloryouſe realme? who ded euer heare ſpeake of ſuche a ſtorye? as to rayſe vp one ſo hygh, whych of her ſelfe was nothynge & maketh of great value, that of it ſelfe was naught.

Alas what is thys? for I caſtynge myne
Joan. 3. eyes on hygh, ded ſe thy goodneſſe, ſo vnknowne grace, & loue ſo incomprehēſyble that my ſyght is wonderfull. Than am I conſtrayned to loke downe, & in ſo lokynge downewarde, I do ſe what I am, and what I was wyllynge to be. Alas I do ſe in it, the lewdeneſſe, darkeneſſe, and

extreme

extreme depenesse of my euyll, My dea-
the whych by hūbleneſſe closeth myne eye
The admyrable goodnesse of the, & the
vnspeakeable euyll whych is in me, Thy
ryght hyghnes & pure maiestie, my ryght Sapi. 14.
fragyle and mortall nature, Thy gyftes,
goodes, & beatytude, my malyce & great
vnkyndnesse. O how good thu arte vnto
me, and how vnkynde am I to the: Thys
that thu wylte, and thys that I pursue.
Whych thynges consydered, causeth me
to maruele, how it pleasyth the to ioyne
thy selfe to me, seynge there is no compa-
ryson betwene vs both.

Thu arte my God, and I am thy
worke, thu my creator, and I thy creature
Now to speake breuely, though I can not Esa. 64.
defyne what it is to be of the, yet knowe
I my selfe to be the least thynge that
maye be compared vnto the. O loue. thu
madyst thys agrement. whan thu dedyst
ioyne lyfe, aud deathe togyther. But the
vnyon hath made alyue deathe. Lyfe dyen
ge, and lyfe without ende, haue made our
deathe a lyfe. Deathe hath geuen vnto
lyfe a quyckenesse, Through suche deathe
I beynge dead, receyued lyfe, and by dea Coloſ. 2.
the I am rauyshed with hym whych is

alyue. I lyue in the, and as for me, of my ſelfe I am dead. And as cõcernynge the bodyly deathe, it is nothynge els vnto me, but a cõmynge out of pryſon. Deathe is lyfe vnto me. For through deathe. I am alyue. Thys mortall lyfe fylleth me full of care, and ſorowe, and deathe yeldeth me content.

Apoc. 14 O what a goodly thynge it is to dye, whych cauſeth my ſowle to lyue. In delyuerynge her frõ thys mortall deathe, it ex̃pteth her frõ the deathe myſerable, & matcheth her with a moſt myghty louer. & vnleſſe ſhe thus dyeth, ſhe lãguyſſheth alwayes. Is not thã the ſowle blameles, whych wolde fayne dye for to haue ſuche lyfe? Yes truly e, & ſhe ought to call deathe her welbeloued frynde, O ſwete deathe, pleſaunt ſorowe, myghty keye delyuerynge from all wyckedneſſe. Thoſe

Roma. 8 whych truſted in the (o lorde) and in thy deathe, were mortyfyed, becauſe they dyd truſt in the, and in thy paſſyon. For with a ſwete ſlepe thu dedyſt put them oute of that deathe whych cauſeth manye to lamente. O how happye is the ſame ſlepe vnto hym, whych whan he awaketh, doth fynde through thy deathe, the lyfe euerlaſtynge.

lastynge. For the deathe is nō other thyn
ge to a christen man, but a lyberte or de=
lyuerance from hys mortall bande.

And the deathe whych is. fearfull to Roma. 7.
the wycked, is plesaunt and acceptable
to them that are good. Than is deathe
through thy deathe destroyed. Therfor
my God, if I were ryghtly taught, I
shulde call the deathe lyfe, and thys lyfe
deathe, ende of laboure, and begynnynge
of euerlastynge ioye. For I knowe that
the lōge lyfe doth lett me from thy syght.
O deathe, come, and breake the same ob Psal. 38
stacle of lyfe. Or els loue, do a myracle
now, syth that I can not yet se my spouse
Transfourme me with hym both bodye &
sowle, and than shall I the better tarry
for the cummynge of deathe. Lete me dye
that I maye lyue with hym. For there is
nō that can helpe me, onles it be thu only.
O my sauer, through faythe I am plan Joan. 15.
ted, and ioyned with the. O what vnyon
is thys, syth that through faythe I am
sure of the. And I maye call the, father
brother, sonne, and husbande. O what
giftes thu dost gyue, by the goodenesse of
those names.

O my father, what paternyte, O my

brother what fraternyte, O my chylde, what dylectyon, O my spouse, what coniunctyon is thys? Father full of humylyte
Apoca 12 Brother hauynge our symylytude, Sone engendered through faythe. & loue, Husbande louynge, and releuynge in all extremyte. But whom doist thu loue? Alas is is she whom thu hast withdrawen from the snare, wherin, through malyce she was bounde, and put her in place, name and offyce of a doughter, syster, mother, and wyfe. O my sauer, the same is a great
Luce. 8. sauoure of swetnesse, ryght plesaūt, and dylectable, whan a man, after the hearynge of thy worde, shall call the without feare, hys father, brother, chylde, & spouse. I in hearynge that worde, do perceyue my selfe to be called there thy mother, syster, doughter, & spouse. Alas the sowle whych doth fynde suche swetnesse, maye consume, and burne for loue.

Is there any loue, onles it be thys, but it hath some euyll condycyon? Is there anye pleasure to be herto estemed? Is there any honoure, but maye be accompted shame, to thys compared? yea, is there
Joan. 14 any profyte equall to thys? More ouer to conclude it breuely. Is there any thynge

that I

that I coulde more ernestly loue? Alas no. For he that vnfaynedly loueth God, reputeth all these thynges worldly, of lesse value than the dūge hylle. Pleasure profyte, honoure of thys worlde, are all but vayne tryfles vnto hym whych hath founde God. Suche loue is so profytable honourable, & abundaunt, that (I dare saye) she only suffyseth the harte of a godly man, and yeldeth hym so content, that he neuer desyreth or wolde haue other. For who so euer hath God, as we ought to haue hym, accounteth all other thynges superfluouse or vayne. 2. Cor. 3

Now thanked by the lorde, through faythe haue I gotē the same loue, wherfor I ought to be satysfyed and content. Now haue I the my father, for defence of my longe youth from wanton folyshnesse. Now haue I the my brother, for to socoure my sorowes wherin I fynde non ende. Now haue I the my sonne. for my feble age as an only staye. Now haue I the a true, & faythfull husbande, for the satisfyenge of my whole harte. Now syth that I haue the, I do forsake all them that are in the worlde. Syth I holde the, thu shalte escape me nomore. Seynge Phil. 2

that I se the, I wyll loke vpon non other thynge that myght kepe me backe from
Esa. 55. the beholdynge of thy dyuynyte. Seynge
Joā. 10. that I do heare the, I wyll heare nothynge that letteth me frō the fruycyō of thy voyce. Syth that I maye frely talke with the, I wyll cōmen with non other. Seynge it pleaseth the to put me so nere the, I wyll rather dye than to touche any other Seynge that I serue the, I wyll serue non other master.

Seynge that thu hast ioyned thy harte with myne, if he depart from thyne, lete hym be ponnyshed foreuer. For the depar
2. thes. 2. tynge from thy loue is harder, than is any dampnacyon. I do not feare the payne of ten thousande helles, so moche as I do feare the ones losynge of the. Alas my God, my father, and creator, do not suffer that the enemy, inuentor of all synne, haue me suche power, that he make me to lese thy presence. For who so euer hath ones felte the losse of thy loue, he shall saye that he wolde rather be bounde for euer in hel-
Ero. 15. le, than to feale the payne that one shall haue by the losse of the same thy loue one momente of tyme. O my sauer, do not permytt that euer I departe from the. But

If it please the, put me in suche a place, that my sowle through wantonnesse of synne be neuer separated from thy loue.

In thys worlde I can not haue perfyghtly thys my desyre. Whych thynge consydered maketh me feruently & with all my harte, to desyre the departynge from thys bodye of synne, not fearynge the deathe nor yet any of her instrumentes. For what feare ought I to haue of my God, whych through loue offered hymselfe and suffered deathe not of dett or dewtye, but because he wolde for my only sake vndo the power that mortall deathe had. Now is Jesus dead, in whom we are all dead, and through hys deathe he causeth euery man to lyue agayne. I meane those whych through fayth are partakers of hys Passyon. For euen as the deathe before the great mystery of the crosse, was harde to euery bodye, and there was no mā but was feared therwith, consyderynge the copulacyon of the bodye & the sowle, their order, loue, and agrement, so were their sorowes extreme in the departynge of the one from the other. Roma. 7. Hebr. 9. Eccle. 41.

But sens it hath pleased the swete lamded offer hymselfe vpon the crosse, hys

great loue hath kyndeled a fyre within the harte so vehement, that euery true beleuer estemeth the passage of deathe but a playe or pastyme, and so prouoketh other constauntly in hys truthe to dye. And cuē as the feare of deathe ded retarde vs, so ought loue to gyue vs a desyre to dye. For if true loue be vnfaynedly within the harte of a man, he can fele non other thynge, because that loue is so stronge of it selfe, that she kepith all the roume, and putteth out all other desyres, not sufferyng any thynge there but God only. For wher soeuer true and perfyght loue is, we do neyther remēbre feare nor yet sorowe

Sapi. 3.

1. Ioā. 4.

If our owne pryde for to attayne honowre, maketh vs to sekk deathe so manye straunge wayes. As if for to haue a folysh pleasure, a man putteth hym selfe in ieopardye of lyfe. If a merchaūte to obtayne ryches, doth daunger hymselfe, somtyme for the value of a shyllynge. If the first cōceyuynge of robery or murther, crueltie or deceyte, doth so blynde a man, that he doubteth nothynge the daunger of deathe, neyther yet myfortune whan he seketh to auēge hymselfe or doth any other euyll. If the fury of syckenesse or the rankenesse

Deute. 16

keneſſe of Malancholy cauſeth a creatu-
re ſcarcely to wyſhe for deathe, & oft tymes to drowne, hãge, or kylle theſelues. For ſuche euyls are ſomtymes ſo great that they cauſe their payned pacyentes to chooſe deathe for lyberte. If it ſo be than that theſe paynes full of euyll, and imperfectyons, cauſeth them not to feare the haſarde of deathe, but rather to thynke that deathe tarryeth to longe. Eccles. 1.

Alas what ought true and laudable loue to do? What ought the loue of the eternall creatour to wyſhe? Shulde ſhe ſturre a harte ſuche wyſe, that he beynge tranſported with ſuche affectyon, ſhulde fele non other thynge in hym? Alas yea. For deathe is a pleſaunt thynge to the ſowle. whych is in loue with God, and eſtemeth the paſſage eaſye, through the whych ſhe commyth out of pryſon. For the harde waye, wherthrough ſhe commeth, can not wearye her for to enbrace her husbande. O my ſauer, how good is the ſame deathe, through whom we ſhall haue the ende of all ſorowes? By whom I ſhall enioye thy ſyght without impedyment, and be tranſſourmed into the lykeneſſe of thy maieſte? Roma. 8. 1. Cor. 13.

O dyathe

O deathe, through thy dede I truſt to haue ſuche honour, as vpon my knees with cryenge and wepynge I do dayly deſyre. Therfor come quyckely, and make an ende of my ſorowes. O happy doughters, ryght holy ſowles ioyned to the cy-
Canti. 5. tie hieruſalem, open your eyes and with pytye loke vpon my deſolacyon. I beſeche yow that in my name ye do ſhewe vnto my beſtbeloue, my God, frynde & kynge, howat euerye houre of the daye, I do languyſh for hys loue. O ſwete deathe, through ſuche loue come vnto me, and with loue brynge me vnto my lorde God.
1. Cor. 15. O deathe where is thy ſtynge and darte Alas they are bannyſhed from myne eyes, for rygour is changed into ſwetneſſe ſeynge that my frynde ded ſuffre deathe vpon the croſſe for my ſake. Hys deathe doth ſo incourage my harte, that thu wert wonders gentyll to me, if I myght folowe hym.

O deathe, I beſeche the come to put the frynde with hys loue, Now ſyth that deathe is ſo pleſaunt a lyfe, that ſhe plea-
Ioz. 1. ſith me more than feareth me, than ought I to feare nothynge but the ryght iudgement of God, All my ſynnes with hys iuſt

balaūce shall be wayed & shewed opēly. Apoca 20
Thys that I haue done. also my thought
and worde shall be better knowne, than
if they were written in a rolle. And we
maye not thynke that charyte wolde offē
de iustyce & truthe. For whoso euer doth
lyue vnfaythfully, shall be ponnyshed in
euerlastynge payne. God is iust and hys
iudgemēt is ryghteouse. All that he doth Psal. 118
is perfyght in all thynges. Alas what
am I consyderynge my ryghtousnesse, I
wretched and poore creature?

I knowe that all the workes of iust mē
are so full of imperfectyon, that afore God
they are more fylthye than myer or any Esa. 64
other vyleneſſe. What wyll it be than cō
cernynge the syunes whych I do cōmyt,
wherof I feale the burden importable?
I can saye nothynge els but that I haue
wonne by them dampnacyon. Is thys the
ende? Shall dyspayre than be the confor
te of my greate ignoraūce? Alas my God
no. For the inuysyble faythe causeth me Hebre. 11
to beleue, that all thynges whych are im
possyble to men, are possyble vnto the. So Luce. 18
that thu do conuerte my worke, whych is
nothynge, into some good worke of thyne
in me, whych is specyally faythe. Than my Joan. 6
lord

lorde, who shall condempne me, & what iudge wyll dãpne me: syth that he whych is geuen me for a iudge, is my spouse, my father, and refuge? Alas what father? Suche as doth neuer condempne hys chylde, but alwayes doth excuse and defende hym.

Than I perceyue to haue non other accuser but Jesus Christ, whych is my redemer, whose deathe hath restored vs our
1. Joã. 2 lost inherytaunce. For he made hym selfe our man of lawe, shewynge hys so worthye merytes afore God, wherwith my great debte is so habundauntly recõpenced, that in iudgement it is accompted for nothynge. O redemer, here is a great loue! We fynde but fewe suche mẽ of lawe. Swete Jesus Christ, it is vnto the that I am a detter, yet dost thu both praye, and
Math. 18 speake for me. And moreouer whan thu dost se that I am poore, with the abũdaũce of thy goodes thu dost paye my debte O incomprehensyble see of all goodnesse. O my father, dost thu vouchesaue to be my iudge, not wyllynge the deathe of a synner? O Jesus Christ, true fysher, and sauer of the sowle, frynde aboue all frynndes. For thu beynge my man of lawe dedyst excuse

dyst excuse and speake for me, where thu couldest iustly haue accused me. Colo. 2.

I feare nomore to be vndone by any man for the lawe is satisfyed by the for all. My swete spouse hath made the payment so habundaunt, that the lawe can aske nothynge of me but is payed of hym. For as I beleue, he hath taken all my synnes vpō hym, and hath geuē me in place of them, hys owne goodes in habundaunce. O my sauer, presentynge thy vertues, thu dost content the lawe. Whan she wyll reproche me of my synnes, thu dost shewe her how willyngly in thyne owue fleshe, thu hast taken the dyscharge of thē, through the coniunctyon of our marryage. Also vpon the crosse through thy passyon, thu hast made satisfactyon for it. Moreouer thy only charyte hath geuē me thys, that thu hast for me deserued. Therfor seynge thy meryte to be myne, the lawe can aske nothynge of me. Than wyll I feare nomore the iudgement, but with desyre rather than parforce, I do tarry for the tyme that I shall se my iudge, and heare a iust iudgemente of hym. Esa. 53. 4 2 1. Pet. 2. 1. Joā. 4.

Yet I knowe that thy iudgemēte is so iust, that there is no faulte therin, & Psal. 11.

that my infydelyte is worthye to ſuffer the cruelneſſe of helle. For if I do only conſydre my deſeruynge I can ſe nothynge in it that can keape me from the fyre of helle. True it is, that the torment of helle was neuer prepared but for the deuyll, and not for reaſonable men. Neuerthelesſe if any man haue ſet in hys mynde
Math. 25 to be lyke to the deuyll, than ought he as the deuyll to be payed with a lyke rewarde. But if a man through cõtemplacyon of the ſowle, do helde of the, hys Angell of coũſell, vertue, goodneſſe & perfecyõ, he is ſure to obtayne heauen, whych is a place of thy deſeruynge for hym. Than ſhall the vycyouſe be ponnyſhed with the
Luce. 13 ſame, to whom they ioyned themſelues. For ſith that they folowed Sathan, they muſt holde ſuche place as is for hym and hys angels prepared.

Now I conſyderynge the dyuerſyte of both the ſortes, am lytle conforted in ſpretty by thys. For I can not denye but I am more lyke the deuyll than the Angell of lyght, wherfor I feare and tremble. For the lyfe of the Angell is ſo pure & myne
Hebre. 1. ſo vnpure, that I am not hynge lyke vnto hym, thys do I confeſſe. But to the other

I am

I am so lyke in my doynges, and so accu
stomed in hys wayes, that of hys payne
& tormente I ought to be partaker. For
the cruell synne whych hath bounde me
in helle, is so great and hys force so stron-
ge, that it leteth nothynge to come from
it, neyther feareth it the cõtrary assaulte
of any man. But he whych is in thys kyn- Luce. 22. 31. 32
de stronge, knoweth not how hys strength
goth awaye, whan a stronger than he cõ-
myth. Synne is stronge whych bryngeth
vs to helle.

And I coulde neuer yet se, that anye
man by meryte or payne takynge, coulde
euer yet vanquyshe that helle, saue only
he whych ded the great assaulte throngh
hys vnspeakable charyte, whan he hum- Phil. 2.
bled hym selfe to the crosse. Wherby he 1. Cor. 1.
hath ouercomen hys enemye, broken helle
and hys power so that it hath no farther
strength to keape anye sowle prysoner,
that hath put her trust in God. Than be
leuynge in the great strength that he
hath, I do not set by helle and synne, no
not so moche as a strawe. So that synne
can neuer haue holde of me, vnlesse it be
for to shewe how my God is mercyfull,
stronge, myghtie, & a pusaũt vanquysher Roma. 8

of all the cuyls whych were within my harte. If my synne forgyuē, is the glorye of my most louynge sauer, I ought also to beleue, that my glorye is encreased therwith, seynge that I am planted or engrafted in hym.

Hys honoure only doth honoure all hys, and hys ryches doth replenysh euery one of hys with hys goodes. Than deathe
Apoca. 5. helle and synne are ouercome by hym. O glottonouse helle, where is thy defence?
1. Cor. 15. Thu cruell vyllayne synne, where is thy tyrannouse power? O deathe where is thy stynge & vyctoryc, whych are so moche spoken of? In steade of deathe, thu deathe geuyst vs lyfe, and so dost thu contrary to thy wyll. Also thu synne which coueryst to drawe yche creature to dāpnacyon thu geuest vs a ladder to reache therby that goodly cytie Hierusalem. Yet wol-
Apoca. 21. dest thu of thy cursed nature that our eternall maker shulde lose hys creature. But through hys loue and grace, the sorye remēbraunce of thy vncomelynesse, doth cause her by repentaunce to come agayne, and submyt her selfe vnto God more than euer she dyd. Hys inestymable goodnesse causeth the to lose the whole

labour whych thu takest all the weke.

Therfor helle hath not had all the nom Osee. 13.
ber that he did pretende to haue. bicause
that the solacyouse shaddowe & power
of hys passyon, is suche a myghtye protec
tyon to the sowle, that she therby nedeth
neyther to doubte deathe, synne, nor helle
Is there anye thynge can pull me backe
if God be wyllynge through hys gyfte
of faythe to drawe me to hym? I meane Joan.
suche faythe as we must nedes haue to 6.44
obtayne the hygh graces from aboue, &
also suche faythe as through charyte doth
ioyne the humble seruaunt to hys maker.
I beynge ioyned vnto hym, ought to haue
no feare of trauayle, payne, nor sorowe,
For who so euer doth wyllyngly suffer
anye maner of deathe or sorowe for the
truthe, as ded Christ, he doth feale in
suche torment great consolacyon for hys Math. 12
sowle, knowynge that as for my selfe, I
am weake, and with God I am ryght
stronge.

Through hys confort I maye do all
thynges. For hys loue is so cōstaūt & per
manēt that it varyeth not for anye world
ly thynge. Who can thā withdrawe me
from hys grace? Surely the great heyth

Roma. 8. of heauen, nor the deapeneſſe of helle, nor the breadeth of the whole earthe, neyther deathe nor ſynne, whych doth warre euery daye agaynſt me, can ſeparate me one myn nute from the great loue & charyte, that my heauenly father through Jeſus Chriſt hath vnto me. Hys goodneſſe is ſuche, that he loueth me whych haue not at all tymes loued hym. And if J now loue hym, than ſhall J feale hys loue to increaſe in me.

Joa. 4 But bycauſe that my loue is not worthy to loue hym, J deſyre hys loue to be myne the whych J feale ſuche as though it were myne owne, Hys deſyre is to loue, and through hys loue he cauſith my harte to be inflamyd with loue.

And through ſuche loue he fyndeth hym ſelfe ſo welbeloued, that hys owne dede yelderh hym wele content, & not my loue

Joan. 13. or ſtrengthe. Contentynge hys ſelfe, hys loue dorh increaſe more in me, than J can of hym deſyre, O true louer, fountayne, or welſprynge of all charyte, and only purſe of the heauēly treaſure. Ought J to thynke, or dare J ſaye what thu art? Maye J write it, or can anye mortall man compre hende thys goodneſſe & loue? And if thu prēte in anye mānys harte, cā he expreſſe it? No

ste: No surely. For the capacyte of no man can comprehende the vnmesurable goodnesses whych are in the, for naturall reasō doth shewe vs howthere is no cōparyson betwyne an eternall & a mortall thynge But whan through loue the mortall is ioyned with the eternall, the mortall thynge is so fulfylled with the eternall, that it can not fynde the ende therof. For it hath in it more good therby, than it can contayne or holde. Roma. 11 Ephe. 3

Therfor doth a man thynke, whych hath the loue of God, that he hath all the goodes in the worlde therwith. Euen as we se the sūne with one only sparcle of hys lyght doth blynde the eye, and yet doth she withholde her great lyghte. But aske the eye what he hath seane, and he wyll saye that he hath beholden the whole bryghtnesse of the sunne. But that is a great lye. For he beynge dymmed with a lytle sparcle, coulde not se the whole clearytye therof. And neuertheles he is so contente, that it semith vnto hym as though he had so moche lyght as the sunne contayneth. Yet if he had more than the seyde sparcle, he were not able to suffer it. Euen so the sowle whych through Roma. 8 Eccs. 10

 fayth

& faulte, & tel me what in suche vysyon thu hast seane. Harkē thā what he sayth
Roma. 11 O the vnspeakeable hyghnesse of the abū
33 daunt ryches or treasure both of the wys dome & knowledge of God. How incom
Sapi. 17 prehēsyble are hys iudgemētes & how vnsearchable hys wayes vnto our weake wittes? O holye Paule, thy wordes causeth vs moche to maruayle, that thu hauynge knowledge of sō heauēly secretes, woldest speake no further in them At the least yet tell vs, what thynge we maye hope to haue one daye through suche godly loue. Geue eare and ponder the wordes that he sayth.
1. Cor. 2. 9. Neyther hath the eye seane, nor yet the eare hearde, neyther yet hath it euer entred into the harte of anye man, what
Esa. 64. 4 God hath prepared for them that loue hym. Aud wolde he speake it no farther? No truly. yet all thys that he sayeth here, is for non other purpose, but to prouoke vs ernestly to loue. He wylleth vs also therin to esteme, that he neyther can declare nor yet name it, & so to geue forth our hartes to pacyēce & hope of that thynge whych
Roma. 8. neuer mā yet coulde se, neyther yet dyscerne, what though many through loue for it hath dyed. O excellent gyfte of faythe

wherof so moche good cõmyth, that it can
sith man to possede the thynge whych he
can not cõprehende. Fayth e ioyned with
the truthe, bryngeth fourth hope, wherby
perfyght charyte is engẽdered. And cha-
ryte is God, as thu knowist. If we haue 1. Joã. 4.
charyte, thã we haue also God therwith.

Than is God in vs, and we are in hym
And all thys cometh through the benefy
te of fayth e. For he dwelleth in all men
whych haue true fayhe. Thus haue we a Joã. 14
greatter treasure thã we cã tell of, or yet
anye man expresse vnto vs. Now to cõclu
de. Syth that so great an Apostle as sa-
ynt Paule is, wyll speake no further of
God & hys inestymable loue, accordynge Roma. 11
to hys ryghteouse exãple and doctryne, I
wyll holde my peace & be stylle, folowyn-
ge neuerthelesse hys teachynges. Not
withstãdynge yet though herin I ackno-
wledge my selfe but earthe and duste, yet
maye I not fayle to yelde thankes vnto my
eternall lyuynge God, for suche great gra
ces, and benefytes, as it hath pleased
hym to gyue me. Vnto that euerlastynge 1. Timo. 1.
kynge of heauen immortall, inuysyble 17
incõprehensyble, myghty, and wyse only,
be all honoure, prayse, glorye, magnyfy-
cence, and loue for euer & euer. Amen.

ſaythe doth fele one ſparcle of the lone of God, doth fynde therwith the heate ſo great and maruelouſe, ſo ſwete and
Pſal. 118 delycyouſe, that it is impoſſyble to her to declare what thynge the ſame loue is.

For a lytle threof that ſhe hath felte doth yelde her mynde ſatiſſyed & deſyerynge of more wherof ſhe hath ynough. So doth ſhe lyue languyſhynge & ſyghynge. The harte doth felewele, that he hath receyued to moche, but he hath cõceyued ſuche deſyre in thys to moche, that he alwayes deſyerith to receyue the thyn
Phil. 1. ge whych he can not haue, neyther is he worthye to receyue it. He knowith the good that he hath alredy to be vnſpeakeable, and yet wolde he haue more of that wherof he can not ſkylle. Truly he can nor fele or thynke the good whych is in
1 Joã. 4. hym. Then lyeth it not in my power, to tell what thynge the loue of God is, ſith that I haue no knowlege of the feruentneſſe therof. He that thynketh to haue all thys loue withyn hys harte, can not truly declare what thynge it is. Happye is he wych hath ſuche abundaũce of thys loue, that he maye ſaye, My God, I haue ynough of it.

So

He whych hath thys loue within hym, Jaco. 3.
dare not moche boaste therof, least in mo-
che speakynge he lose it, vnles it be to edy-
fye hys neybour vnto saluacyon. The im-
possybylyte than of the declaracyon of
thys loue shall make me to holde my pea
ce, For there is no Saynte so perfyght, if
he wyll speake of the loue of the hygh
God, of hys goodnesse, swetuesse, graces,
and of all thynges els whych pertayneth Apoca 3.
to hym, but lokynge a lowe shall fynde
hymselfe vnworthye, and so stoppe hys
mouthe. I than a worme of the earthe,
lessē than nothynge, ought to cease and
not to speake of the incomparable hygh-
nesse of thys loue. Yet were it to moch vn-
kyndenesse to be noted in me, if I had wri
ten nothynge, hauynge that done vnto me
whych wolde satisfye a moche better wyt- Math. 24.
te than myne is. For he that wolde hyde
the goodnesse of God, so good a mastre,
shulde commytt a synne worthye to be
ponnyshed with the euerlastynge payne.

Therfor come. O happye Paule, whych
hast tasted so moche of the same swete ho
nye, beynge blynded for the space of thre 2. Cor. 12.
dayes, & rapte vp vnto the thirde hauē.
Now I besech the, satisfye my ignoraūce

& faulte, & tel me what in suche vysyon thu hast seane. Harkē thā what he sayth
Roma.11 O the vnspeakeable hyghnesse of the abū
11 daunt ryches or treasure both of the wysdome & knowledge of God. How incom
Sapi.17 prehēsyble are hys iudgemētes & how vnsearchable hys wayes vnto our weake wittes? O holye Paule, thy wordes causeth vs moche to maruayle, that thu hauynge knowledge of so heauēly secretes, woldest speake no further in them At the least yet tell vs, what thynge we maye hope to haue one daye through suche godly loue. Geue eare and ponder the wordes that he sayth.
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Esa.64. God hath prepared for them that loue
4 hym. Aud wolde he speake it no farther? No truly. yet all thys that he sayeth here, is for non other purpose, but to prouoke vs ernestly to loue. He wylleth vs also therin to esteme, that he neyther can declare nor yet name it, & so to geue forth our hartes to pacyēce & hope of that thynge whych
Roma.8. neuer mā yet coulde se, neyther yet dyscerne, what though many through loue for it hath dyed. O excellent gyfte of faythe

wherof so moche good cõmyth, that it can
sith man to possede the thynge whych he
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the truthe, bryngeth fourth hope, wherby
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to hys ryghteouse exãple and doctryne, I
wyll holde my peace & be stylle, folowyn-
ge neuerthelesse hys teachynges. Not
withstãdynge yet though herin I ackno-
wledge my selfe but earthe and duste, yet
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kynge of heauen immortall, inuysyble 17
incõprehensyble, myghty, and wyse only,
be all honoure, prayse, glorye, magnyfy-
cence, and loue for euer & euer. Amen.

Textes of the scripture.

These.iiii.clauses of the sacred scripture added my lady Elisabeth vnto the begynnynge and ende of her boke, and therfor I haue here regestred thē in the ende.

Eccle. 25.

There is not a more wycked heade, than the heade of the serpente, And there is no wrathe aboue the wrathe of a womā.

Eccle. 25.

But he that hath goten a vertuouse woman, hath goten a goodly possessyon. She is vnto hym an helpe and pyller, wherupon he restith.

Eccle. 25.

It were better to dwelle with a lyon and dragon, than to kepe house with a wycked wyfe.

Eccle. 7.

Yet depart not from a discrete and good woman, that is fallen vnto the for thy porcyon in the feare of the lorde, For the gifte of her honestie, is aboue golde.

GR. III. BR. MUS.

CErtayne, & sure am I (most gentyll reader) that all they whych shall peruse thys godlye boke, shall not therwith be pleased. For amonge feaders are alwayes sondry appetytes, and in great assemblyes of people, dyuerse, and varyaunt iudgementes, As the saynge, is, so many heades, so many wyttes. Neyther fyne paynted speche, wysdome of thys worlde, nor yet relygyouse hypocresye (whych for pryuate commodyte many men seketh) are herin to be loked for, And a reason why, For he that is here famylyarly commoned with, regardeth no curyosyte, but playnesse and truthe. He refuseth no synner, but is wele contented at all tymes to heare hys hombly tale. Hyde not thy selfe from me (sayth he) whan thu hast done amys, but come boldely face to face, and commen the matter with me. If thy synnes be so redde as scarlet, I shall maketh̄ whyter than snowe, And though thy factes be as the purple, yet shall they apere so whyte as the wolle. Esa. 1, For as truly as I lyue (sayth he) no pleasure haue I in the deathe of a synner, but wyll moch rather that he

Appetytes.

Synner.

The lorde Ezek. 18. 23. 32.

BR. MUS.

turne

turne and be saued. Eze. 33. 11.

If the hombly speche here do to moche offẽde cõsydreit to be the worke of a woman, as she in the bygynnynge therof, haue most mekely desyered. And yet of nõ other woman, than was most godly myn
Dauid. ded. Marke Dauid in the psalter, whych was a man both wyse and lerned, and ye shall fynde hys maner in speakynge not all vnlyke to thys. Faythe (saynt Paule sayth) standeth not in florysshynge eloquence, neyther yet in mannys polytyque wysdome, but in the grace and power of God. 1. Cor. 2. If the ofte repetynge of some one sentence, engendereth a tedyouse werynesse to the reader, lete hym wele
S. Johã peruse the holy workes of S. Johan the Euãgelyst, & I doubt it not but he shall fynde there the same maner of writyng And hys occasyon is (as all the chefe writers afferme) the necessary markynge of the preceptes of helthe, or of matter chefely concernynge the sowles saluacyon. For a thynge twyse or thryse spoken, entereth moche more depely into the remẽbraunce than that is vttered but ones.

And as touchynge the porcyon that my ladye Elisabeth, the kynges most

noble syster hath therin, whych is her trā- Lady hell
lacyon. Chefely haue she done it for her sabeth.
owne exercyse in the frenche tunge, besy-
des the spirytuall exercyse of her innar
sowle with God. As a dylygent & profy-
table bee, haue she gathered of thys flow
re swetnesse both wayes, and of thys boke
consolacyon in sprete. And thynkynge
that other myght do the same, of a most
fre christen harte. she maketh it here cō-
men vnto them, not beynge a nigarde
ouer the treasure of God. Math, 25. The Her first
first frute is it of her yonge, tender, and frute.
innocent labours. For I thynke she was
not full oute xiiii. yeares of age, at the
fynyshynge therof. She haue not done
herin, as ded the relygyouse and anoyn
ted hypocrytes in monasteryes, couctes Lybrares
and colleges, in spearynge their lybrazyes
from men studyouse, and in reseruynge
the treasure contayned in their bokes, to
most vyle dust and wormes. But lyke as
God hath gracyously geuen it, so do she
agayne most frely dystrybute it,

Soch noble begynnynges are neyther
to be reckened chyldysh nor babysh, tho-
ugh she were a babe in yeares, that hath
here geue them. Seldome synde we them The ages
that in

The aged that in the closynge vp of their wythered age, do mynystre lyke frutes of vertu. An infynyte swarme beholde we of olde dotynge bawdes and beastes, that with cõscyences loaden with synne (as S. Paule reporteth them) taketh euery paynted stocke & stone for their God, besydes the small breades that their lecherouse chaplaynes hath blowen vpon. They shall not be vnwyse, that shall marke herin, what commodyte it is, or what profyght myght growe to a christen cõmen welthe if youth were thus brought vp in vertu & good lettres. Yf soch frutes come forewarde in chyldehode, what wyll folowe and apere whan dyscressyon and yeares shall be more rype and auncyent? A most manyfest sygne of Godlynesse is it in the fryndes, where youth is thus instytute, and a token of wonderfully faythfull dylygence, in the studyouse teachers, tuters, and dayly lokers on.

Youth.

Tuters.

Nobylyte whych she hath gote of blode in the hyghest degre, hauynge a most victoryouse kynge to her father, & a most vertuouse, & lerned kynge agayne to her brother, is not in the earely sprynge dystayned with wanton ignorãce, neyther yet

yet blemyshed with the commen vyces of dyssolute youth, But most Plenteously adourned with all kyndes of languages, lernynges, and vertues, to holde it styll in ryght course. The translacyon of thys worke, were euydence stronge ynough, if I had not els to laye for the matter. But marke yet an other moch more effectuall and clere, at the whych not a fewe lerned men in Germany haue wondered. In. iiij. noble languages, Latyne, Greke Frenche, and Italyane, wrote she vnto me these clauses folowynge. Whych I haue added to thys boke, not only in commendacyon of her lerned youth, but also as an example to be followed of other noble men and women, cõternynge their chyldren. The written clauses are these, whych she wrote first with her owne hande, moch more fynely than I coulde with anye prentynge letter set thẽ fourth.

Lerned.

Clauses added.

Latyne.

Stultus dixit in corde suo, non est Deus. Illi corrupti sunt, & abhominabiles in sua impietate, nullus est qui aliquid boni facit.

French.

Le fol disoit en sõ cœur, il n'a nul Dieu. Ilz sont corumpus & sont abhomi-

nables en leur impiete, il n'a nul qui faict bien.

Italiane. Is ſtulto diſſe uel ſuo core, non v' e alcuno Dio. Corrutti ſono & abhominabile nella loro impietà, niſſuno è buono.

Greke. Ton theon phoboũ, tous de goneis tima, tous de Philous aeſchynon.

The firſt clauſe in thre lãguages, latyne, frenche, and Italyane, comprehẽdeth thys only ſentence, as I ſhewed afore in the Epyſtle dedycatory.

Antichriſt hys clergy. The fole ſayth in hys harte, there is no God. Corrupt they are, and abhominable in their wyckednesſe (or blaſphemyes agaynſt God) not one of them doth good.

The Greke clauſe is thus to be Englyſhed.

Chriſtiane. Feare God, honoure thy parentes, and reuerence thy fryndes.

Thus haue ſhe geuen vs coũſell, both to go and to come, to leaue and to take. To declyne

declyne from the euyll, and to do that is good Psal. 36. To flee from the Antichrist & hys great body of synne or blasphemouse cruell clergy, & to returne to God by a perfyght feare, honoure. and loue. So lyuely Apothegmes, or breue and quycck sẽtences, respectynge christyanyte, haue seldom come from women. I haue serched Plutarchus, Boccatius, Bergomas, Textor, & Lander of Bonony. whych all wrote of the vertues and worthy actes of womẽ. But amonge them all haue I founde no counsels so necessary to the cõmen welthe of our christyanyte. I denye it not, but excellent thynges they vttered, and matters of wysdome wonderfull, concernynge morall vertues. But these most hyghly respecteth the kyngedome of fayth and regymẽt of the sowle, whych Jesus Christ the eternall sonne of God, from heauen by hys doctryne and death so busyly sought to clere. Many graue sentences had they concernynge pryuate causes. But vnyuersally these are for all sortes of people, hygh, lowe, hayle, sycke, ryche, poore, lerned, & vnlerned, that myndeth to haue fredome by Christes deadly sufferynges, or to be delyuered frõ helle, synne, deathe, & the deuyll,

The pope

Writers

Women

All sortes

by the pryce of hys precyouse bloude.

No realme vndre the skye hath had more noble women, nor of more excellent graces, than haue thys realme of Englande, both in the dayes of the Brytaynes, and sens the Englysh Saxons obtayned it by valeaunt conquest. Guendolena the wyfe of Locrinus the seconde kynge of Brytayne, beynge vnlaufully dyuorced from hym for the pleasure of an whore, whom he longe afore had kepte, tryed it with hym by dynte of the swerde, had the victory, and reigned after hym as kynge the space of. xv. yeares, tyll her sonne Maddan come to laufull age. Guendolena. Cordilla the doughter of kynge Leyer, and leaft of all her systers. as her father was deposed, & exyled out of hys lande, she receyued, conforted, and restored hym agayne to hys princely honoure, and reigned alone after hys deathe, for the space of. v. yeares Cordilla. Cambra the doughter of kynge Belyne, and wyfe to Antenor than kynge of France, ded not only excede in bewtie, but also in wysdome. In so moch that she first instructed the noble men how to buylde cyties, castels, and other stronge holdes, the cōmē people more comely maners, and the womē a most se-

mely

mely deckynge of their heades. She made their cyuyle lawes, whych vpon her name were called. Leges Sycambrorum. She taught them to sowe flaxe and hempe, to watter it, drye it, dresse it, spynne it, weaue it, whyten it, and fashyon it, to all maner of vse for the bodye. Lawes. Hempe in vse

Martia the wyfe of kynge Guythelyne, a lady excedyngly fayre, wyse, & lerned in all the lyberall scyences, inuentred thynges wonderfull by the hygh practyse of her wytt. After the death of her husbāde she reigned .vij. yeares as kynge, tyll Sicilius her sonne came to age. She redressed the commen welthe, refourmed the grosse maners of the people, and made most honest lawes/ called of her name, Leges Martiane. So delyghted the frenche kynge Nicanor in the wysdome, lernynge, and comely maners of hys wyfe Constantia, the doughter of kynge Eliodorus, that he not only holpe her brother Geruntius in see battayle agaynst the kynge of Orchades, but also sent hys most dere sonne Priamus into Brytayne to haue the same selfe bryngynge vp. The Scottysh kynge Finnanus. thought hys pryncely honour most gloryously increased, as he had obtayned Martia. Constantia. Agasis.

Agasta the doughter of kynge Blegabridus, to be coupled in maryage with Dorstus hys sonne, for the manyfolde graces that he behelde in her. What though the seyd vngracyouse Dorstus, in spyght of the Brytaynes, ded afterwarde vse her most wyckedly. Bundwyca a womā both hygh of stature, and stomacke, also of most noble lynage amonge the Brytaynes, perceyuynge the hauoke whych the Romanes dayly made in the lande, with great puissaunce of worthy warryours she inuaded them, slewe them, hynge vp their captaynes, and folowed the remnaunt of them to the very Alpes of Italy. Where at the lattre by reason of dayly labours, she syckened and so dyed, euen the very glory of women, sayth Ponticus Virunnius.

Bũdwyca.

Voada the first wyfe of kynge Aruiragus, a woman of wonderfull force & hart strongly armed her selfe. her. ij. doughters, and. v. thousande women more of the Britannysh bloude / in battayle agaynst the furyouse fearce Romanes, to suppresse their tyranny and execrable fylthynesse in abusynge maydes, wyues, and wydowes. But as she behelde the victory vpon their sydes bycause she wolde not come vnder

Voada.

their

their captyuyte, she poysened her selfe, & so dyed. Voadicia her yonger doughter, afterwarde escapynge the handes of the seyd Romanes, with a myghty power of the Brytancs entered into the yle of Mæne, and in a nyght bartayle, there slewe thē in a wonderfull nombre, destroyenge their fortalyces, and holdes. Notwithstandynge at the lattre beynge taken, she was byheaded, her eldar syster beynge maryed to kynge Marius. Athildis the doughter of the seyd kynge Marius, was also a most noble woman, whom the frenche kynge Marcomerus marryed for the only naturall gyftes and scyences whych she had aboue other women, and had vū. sonnes by her. Claudia Rufina, a noble Brytayne, wyttye and lerned both in Greke and Latyne, hauynge to husbande one Aulus Rufus a lerned knyght, a poete of Bonohy & a phylosopher of the Stoycall sort, is moch cōmēded of Martialis the poete, for the Epygrammes and poemes whych she than compyled in both those tunges. Voadicia. Athildis. Claudia Rufina.

Emerita the syster of kynge Lucius, whych is called the first christened kynge, a lady most vertuouse and faythfull for cō stauntly affermynge the veryte of Chryst, Emerita.

suffered most tyrannouse death and was
Helena Flauia. brent in the fyre. Helena Faluia, the doughter of kynge Coelus, and mother to great Constantyne the Emprour, was a woman of incomparable bewtie and lernynge. Non coulde be founde lyke her in the artes lyberall, neyther yet in the fyne handelynge of all instrumentes of musyke. She excelled all other in the dyuerse speches of nacyons, specyally in the Latyne, Greke, and Hebrue. She made a boke of the prouydence of God, an other of the immortalyte of the sowle, with serten Greke poemes, epystles, and dyuerse other treatyses. Constantia her daughter, was also a woman of most excellent giftes, had she not in the ende declyned to the detestable secte of the Arryanes, by serten hypocrytysh prestes. Vrsula Cynosura, the
Cōstātia.
Vrsula. floryshynge dauter of Sionothus the duke of Cornewale, was so nobylly brougt vp in all lyberall dyscyplyne, that Conanus the kynge of lytle Brytayne desyred her to wyfe, and as she went thydrewarde with. xi. thousande Brytaynes wyues more, by chaūce of wether and vyolence of see rouers both she and they perysshed by the waye.

Anna due Anna the syster of Aurelius Ambrosius

whych was afterwarde marryed to Lotho the kynge of Pyctes, & Anna the twynne syster of kynge Arthure, are of writers magnyfyed for their dyuerse and excellent graces. Morganis a woman of incomparable loue towardes her parentes, and contraye, so secretly and wysely conuayed the body of kynge Arthure, the most worthy gouernour of the Brytaynes, that the Englysh Saxons coulde neuer come to it, to do their vyolēce theron. Hermelinda, kynge of the Englysh Saxons bloude, for her excellent bewtie and noble behauer became the wyfe of Cunibertus the kynge of Lombardy. Hylda, a noble woman, both godly, wyse, and lerned, not only dysputed in the open Synode at Strenesshalce in the North contraye agaynst the prelates, concernynge their newly founde out celebracyon of Eastre, and their crowne shauynge, with other ceremonyes, but also wrote a treatyse agaynst bysshopp Agilbert a Frenche man, the busyest amonge them. The thre doughters of kynge Alphrede, Elsleda, Elfritha, and Ethelgora, were wonderfully experte in the lyberall scyences Alenor the wyfe of kynge Henry the seconde, was lerned also, & wrote dyuerse

Morganis.

Hermelinda.

Hylda.

Tres filiæ

Alenora.

epystles to pope Celestyne the thirde, & also to kynge Johan her yongest sonne.

Joanna. Joāna the yongest daughter of the seyd kynge Henry, so moch delyghted in good letters, that before she shulde be marryed to kynge wyllyam of Cycyll, she caused her father to sende ouer .ij. lerned men of Englande. walther and Rychard with a frenche doctour called Petrus Blesensis to instruct hym in them, specyally in the arte of versyfyenge. And at her cōmynge thydre, the one of those Englysh men was made archebyshop of Panorme, & the other byshop of Siracusa, in recompēce of their labours. Margarete the noble mother of kynge Henry the .viij. so plenteously mynded the preferment of scyences & goynge forewarde of lernynges, that she buylded in Cambryge for the same porpose, the colleges of Christ & of S. Johan the Euāgelyst, and gaue landes for their maynte-

Margareta.

Elisabeth naunce, as quene Elisabeth ded afore, to the quenes college there. Longe were it to rehearce the excedynge nombre of noble women, whych in thys lande of Brytayne or realme of Englande, haue excelled in bewtie, wytte, wysdome, scyence, lāguages, lyberalyte, polycyes, heroycall force, and

ce, and soch other notable vertues, and by reason of them done feates wonderfull. Eyther yet to sort out their Names and regestre them one by one, whych haue bene marryed out of the same, to Emprours, kynges, dukes, earles, worthy captaynes, Phylosophers, phesycyanes, astronomers, poetes, & other of renomed fame and letters, only for their most rare graces and gyftes. Names

Though non in thys lande haue yet done as ded amonge the Grekes Plutarchy, & amonge the Latynes Boccatius with other authours afore named, that is to saye, left behynde them Cataloges or Nomenclatures of famouse and honorable women, yet haue it not at any tyme bene barrayne of them. No, not in the dayes of most popysh darkenesse. As apereth by Alenor Cobham, the wyfe of good duke Vmfrey of Glocestre, brother to kynge Hē ry the. fift. Whom Antichristes grande captaynes, the byshoppes than of Englā de, in hate of her name and beleue, accused of sorcerouse inchauntmentes and experymentes of Necromancy agaynst their holy horned whorysh churche. And at the last slewe her noble husbande in a false parlemē Writers Alenor Cobham.

lement at Bury, by their owne hyred slaughter man Pole, as they neuer are without soch. If they were worthy prayse, whych had these aforenamed vertues syngle, or after a bodyly sort only, we must of congruence graunt them worthy double honoure, whych haue them most plēteously doubled. As now sens Christes Gospell hath ryssen, we haue beholden them, & yet se them styll to thys daye in many noble women, not ryssynge of flesh and bloude as in the other but of that myghty lyuynge sprete of hys, whych vanquyshed deathe, helle, and the deuyll.

Double honoure.

Anne Askewe. Acts & mon. lib. 16. cap. 25. pag. 1126.

Consydre yet how strongly that sprete in Anne Askewe, set them all at nought with all their artyllery and mynysters of myschefe both vpon the racke and also in the fyre. Whose memory is now in benedyccyon (as Jesus Syrach reporteth of Moses) and shall neuer be forgotten of the ryghteouse. She as Christes myghty membre, hath strongly troden downe the head of the serpent, and gone hence with most noble vyctory ouer the pestyferouse seede of that vyperouse worme of Rome, the gates of helle not preuaylynge agaynst her. What other noble women haue,

Math. 16. 19.

Noble

it

it doth now, and wyll yet herafter apere more largely by their godly doctryne and dedes of fayth. Marke thys present boke for one, whose translacyon was the worke of her. whych was but a babe at the doynge therof. Marke also the graue sentences, whych she geueth fourth to the worlde & laude that lyuynge father of our lorde Jesus Christ, whych hath thus taken hys heauenly wysdome from the great graue senyours, that only are wyse in their owne consaytes, and geuen it so largely to chyldrē, Math. 11. That heauenly lorde graūt her and other noble women longe contynuaūce in the same to hys hygh pleasure. That lyke as they are become gloryouse to the worlde by the stody of good letters, so maye they also apere gloryouse i hys syght by dayle exercyse in hys dyuyne scriptures, Whose nature is in procesſe of tyme to kyndle their myndes and inflame their hartes in the loue of Christ their eternall spouse, as thys present boke requyreth, So be it.

Women.

Prayer.

Thus endeth thys godly Medytacyon of the christen sowle concernynge a loue towardes God and hys Christ, aptely translated into Englysh by the ryght vertuouse lady Elyzabeth doughter to our late souerayne Kynge Henry the. viij.

¶ The .xiiii. Psalme of Dauid, called, *Dixit insipiens.* touched afore of my lady Elizabeth.

FOoles that true fayth yet neuer had,
Sayth in their hartes, there is no God.
Fylthy they are, in their practyse,
Of them not one, is godly wyse.
From heauen the lorde, on man ded loke,
To knowe what wayes, he vndertoke,
All they were vayne. and went a straye,
Not one he founde, in the ryght waye,
In harte and tunge, haue they deceyte,
Their lyppes throwe fourth, a poysened beyte.
Their myndes are mad, their mouthes are wode.
And swyft they be, in shedynge blode.
So blynde they are, no truth they knowe,
No feare of God, in them wyll growe.
How can that cruell sort be good?
Of Gods dere folcke, whych sucke the blood?
On hym ryghtly, shall they not call,
dyspayre wyll so, their hartes appall.

As

The Conclusyon.

At all tymes God, is with the iust/
Bycause they put, in hym their trust.
Who shall therfor, from Syon geue,
That helthe whych hāgeth, in our beleues
Whan God shall take, frō hys the smart,
Than wyll Jacob, reioyce in hart.

Prayse to God.

JR this B m.9.d.6 W D.2 T im.27.

Imprented in the yeare of our lords
1548. in Apryll.